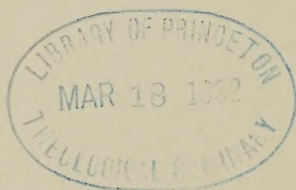


*Sonnets of
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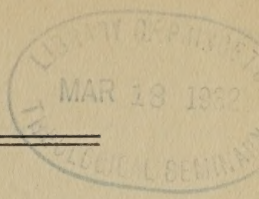
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SONNETS OF NORTH AND SOUTH

FREDERICK [✓]EDWARDS



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TO MY
CHILDREN

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FLORIDA

NOVEMBER

ALL SAINTS AT ST. AUGUSTINE

Under an azure sky the marshes sweep
In a great circle. O'er their green repose
A grateful breath of springtime softly blows
From where, afar, the low white sand dunes keep
The unseen marches of the thundering deep.
Upon the wind the rumor comes and goes.
Around the rim of the horizon flows
A decorative band of clouds asleep

Upon the blue, like orchard trees in May,
Bubbles of starry bloom all pink and white.
Above my head the ancient cedars sway
In holy peace. So I observe the day
Marking the lines of pelicans in flight
And hold communion with the saints in light.

Nov. 1.

IS THIS NOVEMBER

Is this November! With a lantern moon
Swinging deep shadows under leafy trees
Still murmuring music in a summer breeze,
Where mockingbirds, that should be sleeping, croon
The songs they sang all through the afternoon:
While sweet cicada bells, of all degrees,
Prolong the strains in minor ecstasies;
And allamandas bloom! Forsooth, how soon

On such a night of beauty we forget
The darkening landscape and the closing grip
Of northern winter with its icy breath!
These soft assurances disarm the threat.
Life meets the future with a smiling lip
And fears no more the great adventure—death.

Nov. 7.

NOCTURNE IN BLUE

Blue is the everlasting depth of space,
And blue the quiet moonlight as it falls
Upon the still, sharp features of the walls;
With deeper blues where sober shadows trace
The marks of time upon an ancient face.
Blue is the dusk from which the locust draws;
Blue as a gem the last faint star that calls
Across the void to the new waves' blue race

Behind the moon. A symphony of tone,
Wherein the spirit for a time may dwell,
Attuned, attentive, to the truth made known;
While nature lays upon its eyes the spell
Of secret beauty none may ever tell,
And each must gather for himself alone.
Nov. 10.

ORBITS

Around me in the dark of matter swung
Souls in their orbits sealed, close-eyed, close-lipped;
To sense inexplicable till one slipped
A shutter in its silent flight and flung
Interior light upon an inner world; and clung
A moment visible; then tangent dipped
Into the night. But one there was that stripped
The veil asunder and resplendant hung

In all the lonely beauty of its fire
Fanned by a wind ascendant, softly blown
From the far bugles of divine desire
Over its fields, cloud-haunted, zone on zone;
Drawing the bloom augmenting in full choir
Towards the heights explored by love alone.
Nov. 13.

THANKSGIVING IN GEORGIA

In Bacchanalian dance the Georgia clays,
Over their swinging sun-burnt shoulders, smile,
And Autumn, jovial harvester, beguile
To linger with them in the mellow haze
Of sifted sunlight, down the silent ways,
Where gorgeous oaks still roof the leafy aisle;
Or, through the corn and cotton, mile on mile,
Go revelling bareheaded in a blaze

Of red and orange. Here the procreant earth,
Still holding in her breast the summer glow,
Observes the festival in holy mirth,
While through her veins the vital forces flow;
And singing fields are green again in birth,
While northern lands are white with drifting snow.
Thanksgiving Day.

BETTER BE DEAD

Better be dead than silent; once being dead
To those still body-bound they have access
In ways more intimate, to soothe and bless.
Their presences are somehow felt and read;
We have communion and are comforted.
There is on earth a far keener distress;
To know them here; crave their denied caress;
Sick for the friendly word that is not said;

Sit out the expectant hours when evening falls,
Hearing no footstep at the garden gate;
Know there are those who do not have to wait,
But somewhere now, within some other walls,
The voice we miss—and others—how it galls—
The day's adventures cheerfully relate.
Nov. 30.

DECEMBER

A LITTLE HOUSE

A little house sits on the hilltop street,
Gazing upon our life with quiet face,
Trimmed by the starry jasmine with white lace.
The long-leaf pines stand guard on sturdy feet,
While in their singing tops the four winds meet.
The neighbors love to linger at the place
Still bearing touches of a woman's grace.
The life they lived was unpretentious, sweet.

She was the first to go; and he stayed on
Tending her flowers after she had gone.
One day they found him dead upon the floor.
His body lies with her's. The weathered door,
Behind the screen, is open to the air.
As I go by, I sometimes think they're there.
Dec. 1.

MEDLEY

What is the time of year, say I,
When hickory trees are amber brown
And plump ripe nuts come tumbling down,
While, pirouetting in the sky,
I see the rose and butterfly!
The old weeds wear the dreamer's crown,
But drowsily around the town,
Like June pewees, the peddlers cry
Green salads and young cabbages.
Fall flowers still in gardens grow
Where beans show frosty ravages;
And men are picking oranges
Beside the strawberry blossom snow.
What month is this, I'd like to know.
Dec. 4.

DECEMBER MOONLIGHT

This light has once been lived in ways direct ;
Now when the burden of the day is done
And the long night of darkness has begun,—
Some ministry of healing to effect,
Or living o'er again in retrospect,—
Dreaming it comes from the departed sun,
Veiled at the window like a holy nun.
So some old fragment of a life, reject,

From its far outpost in the conscious deep,
Held firmly in its dark recognizance,
On the cold lava of its shield may reap
Harvests of unimpounded radiance,
And send them glimmering down the ways of sleep
To light the world of memory with romance.
Dec. 7.

THE EAST COAST

Fantastic lonely dunes, where wild winds roam ;
A shelving bench of shifting sable sand
Down to the wide, wet, shining lilac band
For ever traversed by the flowering foam !
Beyond, green hollows, where the breakers comb,
And whirling seafoam dance the saraband !
Then the deep cobalt, brother to the land,
Supporting the clear soaring azure dome !

Such is the outer rampart of the deep
From Fernandina to the last long Key :
Over its edge in spots the houses peep,
Lost in the lines of its immensity ;
And here and there the little motors creep
And sputter at the land and sky and sea.
Dec. 14.

GRASSHOPPER AND CHAMELEON

The broad poinsetta leaves were faintly stirred
By a chameleon with a lively air,
And on the warm red bricks beside my chair
There sat a grasshopper all helmed and spurred,
As large in body as a little bird,
Regarding me with an orthopterous stare.
All green and gold was he, with ruby flare
Of fanning fire on his wings, that blurred

Into the sunlight, setting it aflame.
Then the chameleon incandescent grew
And through its lucent body went and came
The irised voltage of a spark that drew
The bush into its burning, and I knew
The presence of the Power that has no name.
Dec. 14.

WEATHER

A trailing shadow from the falcon tip
Of silent winter's grey remorseless wing;
A seaborne rain, with clear skies following.
Then out of the still east a great moon ship,
With rime upon her spars from tip to tip,
Sailing from night to morn and vanishing
Into the west with voices of the spring.
Now lazily upon the ebb we slip,

Soothed by a music soft and indolent,
Through some great leisure in the cosmic ways,
Past golden orchards ripe and somnolent,
Back into autumn's dreaming drift of days;
'Till this December's tidal temperament
Swings us anew into another phase.
Dec. 16.

SWAN FLIGHT

After the wonder of a moonlit night,
With solemn sense of something passing by
Stilling and cold—there comes a dawning sky,
Withdrawn to an immeasurable height,
Blue as the spring's forget-me-nots and bright
With little flocks of silvery clouds that fly
Beyond the levels of the human eye
Into the fountains of the hidden light.

No mortal taint attains this altitude
Where some still life for ever quickeneth
The loveliness of its sweet solitude;
And these white clouds, borne on the morning's
breath,
Seem like pure souls in the beatitude
Of their deliverance from the night of death.
Dec. 18.

COREOPSIS

Where Spanish mosses hang their bannerols
Far in the thousand-columned cypress glades,
Appears a troop of graceful Grecian maids.
Among the shadows of the urnlike boles
The great pileated woodpecker rolls
Its summons down the silent colonnades.
The snowy heron pauses where it wades
And little fishes flock in silver shoals

To watch them dancing on the water's brink
With sun-gold hair and laughing nut-brown eyes;
And when they pause at last and stoop to drink
From the dark pool, a myriad butterflies
Within the mirror mesh the mystic link
Between two worlds of cypress woods and skies.
Dec. 19.

NOEL

When silence lay upon the night profound
Afar in heaven I heard a woman sing
A song of love that made the welkin ring.
So passing sweet was the melodious sound
That every star upon the heights was crowned
And in its homage, rapt and wondering,
Like David, smote upon a radiant string.
'Till earth and sky in harmony were bound.

For this dear love, of which the woman sang,
Was her own child whom she had brought to birth;
And this dear Joy with which the heavens rang
Had tabernacled once upon the earth;
Wherefore, all Christians, who have known the pang,
Sing ye Noel to-day with holy mirth.
Dec. 25.

YEARLY STATEMENT

Another year is added to the roll
Already longer than I care to know;
And yet as time goes on I watch them go
With no regrets for all the heavy toll
That has been taken, or the slender dole
Still credited to one whose funds are low;
Since, spite of thrift, his credit may not grow.
Strange, if the present has no other goal,

That death should find us so indifferent.
And yet, men who in life have had so much—
Friends, family, fortune, honors, learning, art—
Still calmly view the ultimate event,
Waiting the moment when they feel the touch
Upon the shoulder, bidding them depart.
Dec. 31.

JANUARY

NEW YEAR

Now I would make for you a true New Year!
See all the snow melt into laughing rills,
Kissing forget-me-nots and daffodils;
Lead you beneath the reddening trees to hear
The love-crazed rapture of the birds. For, dear,
The tide of life has earthward turned and fills
All hearts and veins; even the stolid hills
Are amorous of heaven drawing near
And melting in the heat of the embrace.
So would I see upon your lovely face
The dawning love-lights of eternal youth;
And hear you whisper in my ear the truth
That death and winter now for you are past
And spring has come into your heart at last.
Jan. 1.

THE WAVE

A wave that slowly mounts a tropic beach,
Curving voluptuously in the haze;
A leisurely retreat in swirling maze;
Then a return, with still a further reach
Into the aching sands that so beseech
The grateful thunder of its rainbow sprays;
Are so impatient of its slow delays;
So thirsty for the cooling draughts that leach
The torturing fever from their barren breasts.
'Tis so the tide comes in, until at last,
Triumphantly it rears its foaming crests;
Poises one splendid moment, holding fast;
Then plunges forward on its shining face,
Flooding and hiding all in its embrace.
Jan. 4.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE FROGS

New York to Jacksonville: the night mail flies,
Leaving at last the spectre of the snow.

Through open windows softer breezes blow
And hour by hour new constellations rise
To deck the splendors of the austral skies.

From every pond and stream and overflow,
Where stars are rising too, the pipers blow
Their shrilling pipes and raise their joyful cries.

While in the temple courts, this day, divines,
Sought for by pilgrims with their offering,

In painful erudition scan the lines,
Crowning their exegesis as their king.

These rabbis of the marshes know the signs
And sing in honor of the Lord of Spring.

Feast of the Epiphany. Jan. 6.

THE THINGS I'D LIKE TO BE

There are so many things I'd like to be.

First: I should like the freedom of the air.

Be the four winds in turn; in foul and fair
Racing the ocean; humming in the tree;

A zephyr playing with a bumblebee.

I'd like to be the grass, rooted somewhere;

Waiting upon the sun, with time to spare.

I'd be a tutelary deity;

My own life localized and marrying
Forest and mountain, fireside and spring.

A connoisseur of life, a specialist,

In all the various ways one may exist.

Why always be plain human at your birth?

Tincture it with the other lives on earth!

Jan. 11.

THE MULBERRY TREE

Out of the snowdrifts tunnelled into lanes,
Early we came in the Epiphany,
Into the hills above the southern sea.
A springtime air, after the gentle rains,
Blew flecks of cloud before it, white as grains
Of polished rice; and, in a mulberry tree,
Wooded all the morning long, caressingly,
Until the virgin sap within its veins

Burst into little leaves for it to kiss;
Unfolding, hour by hour, at love's behest,
Into the beauty of the life divine;
A miracle of equal portent this
As when at Cana's feast, a silent guest
Once turned the water into generous wine.
2nd S. af. Epiphany. Jan. 15.

RAPS

Who was it tapped upon the table then?
What was that rustling in the empty chair?
Did I hear birdlike whisperings somewhere?
They tell us those who go come back again
And manifest their presence to us when
Conditions favor them. 'Tis a nightmare
Of superstition! Yet, indeed, I swear,
I did hear something; be it mice or men;

Contraction or expansion in the wood!
I wish such things were better understood!
I would not be discourteous to a guest;
Much less to one unseen who loved me best
And strives to speak. What was that overhead!
I'm getting queer; I think I'll go to bed.
Jan. 17.

CANDLE ENDS

Was it with them, once on a time, high noon?
Each untrimmed mind is smoking at the wick
And guttering in a greasy candlestick
Set in the shadows of a foul saloon.

Night shows only the dark side of the moon
And brings small, stagnant, evil things that prick
And in the rancid ruins crawl and stick.
When closing time comes it will be a boon.

Why seek by foolish kindness to delay
The painful ending of a dreary play,
The point of which by now no one divines
And weary actors have forgot their lines!
Welcome the hour when the last word is said
And death may heal these souls now worse than dead.
Jan. 19

GREY DAYS

I love these brooding days of quiet grey,
Warm with the presence of the budding spring:
When a rare stillness falls on everything;
And nature seems to sit beside the way,
Unmoved by haste, unfretted by delay,
Rich in the promise of her burgeoning.
Even the birds flit by on noiseless wing,
As though they would their silent homage pay

To this great mystery. This is not cloud
That dims the sky; but some emotion deep
And intimate; that cannot speak aloud,
Save in swift happy tears, that pass and sweep
The gentle veil aside; and then comes through
The light serene from eyes of smiling blue.
Jan. 25.

THE NORTHER

Again the north has laid its chilly hand
Upon us; and the growers fear a freeze.
I have put sackcloth on my little trees.
My neighbor's fowls, in a dejected band,
Beneath the shelter of the guavas stand;
Lost, so it seems, in gloomy reveries;
With feathers out at elbows and at knees.
This is no more the fabled sunny land.

And yet, as I sit by a pinewood fire,
A glowing bowl of fresh nasturtiums
Looks at me with a cheerful countenance,
And fragrant roses o'er my poets aspire;
While at the windowpane there gently thrums
A lovely spray of the Etoile de France.
Jan. 26.

AFTER THREE DAYS

After three days of intermittent gloom,
The sky this morning shows a smiling face;
And through the boundless fields of quickening
space,
The little flowers of light are all in bloom.
Old mother earth once more sits at her loom.
Over her shoulders playful squirrels race;
And at her feet the ground doves proudly pace,
The gentle bride sighing beside the groom.

As quickly gone as come,, the winter threat
Leaves little memory and no regret.
The spring again asserts its mastery.
The meadowlarks are singing on the downs,
And we go forth light-heartedly to see
The fair bauhinias putting on their crowns.
Jan. 27.

BAAL

Master and Lord of all! In heaven he stands,
With feet planted upon the brazen sea;
The bare earth flinching in her agony;
While bound in the intolerable sands
Her children cower with uplifted hands,
And heads bowed down before this majesty.
Naught moves save carrion vultures ominously
Sweeping the fiery haze in silent bands;

Gathering in narrowing circles o'er the spot,
Where some sad thing—at last—I know not what—
Far in the lonely bush has paid the price;
Laid down its farthing for the sacrifice.
Lord of the Noon! Thy vultures overhead
Write on the sky the rubric of the dead.
Jan. 30.

SLOWLY THE GREAT IMPRESSIONS FADE AWAY

Slowly the great impressions fade away,
Like sunset splendors from the evening sky.
Where, now, the morning, with its portent high?
The spell of orators of yesterday;
The books that o'er us for a time held sway;
Love's serenade and agonizing cry?
Music and discord—into silence die.
All the inevitable law obey:

And memory is left by old camp fires,
Tending the dying flame of old desires,
While in the deepening shadows night draws near—
And in the night, perchance, the ancient fear.
Till kindly dawn at last lets down the bars;
And peace comes in—and with her come the stars.
Jan. 31.

FEBRUARY

BIRDS IN THE BUSH

THE TOWHEE

At early morn, before one well can see,
Deep in the mist, beneath the scrubby thatch,
I hear the enterprising towhees scratch,
Like little animals, and say to me,—
“To-whit, to-whee! Whit-whit! Towhee! Towhee”
For all their seeming boldness, they’re your match,
And you’ll wait patiently before you catch
A glimpse of their becoming livery—

Chestnut and black, with just a touch of white.
But if you win their confidence aright,
First one and then another will appear,
With tail a-tilt and full of homely cheer;
Still all the while working industriously,
Hunting a breakfast, with a “Whit to-whee!”

THE FLICKER

When first the towhee spoke a voice demurred
From somewhere in the scrub oak with a snicker,
“Ke-ah! Ke-ah! Ke-ah! O whicker! whicker!”
As if one plainly said,—“Don’t be absurd!
“You’re early, sir; but not the only bird
“Who’s up and breakfasting; I have been quicker!
“I—I—Ke-ah! Ke-ah! the flicker! flicker!”
In other lands a more melodious word

May usher in the morn,—the soaring lark;
The robin singing in the maple tree;
Or our dear white-throat chanting “Can-a-dee!”
But no more cheerful notes than these could mark
The coming of the dawn upon the hush
And poverty of the Floridian bush.

Feb. 1.

SHAPES IN THE WOOD

The dawn is dimly coming in the skies,
But heavy on the jackpines hangs the mist,
And as I watch their shadowy outlines twist,
Among them strangely moving shapes arise,
Beyond the definition of the eyes.

Aureoles of crocus, rose, and amethyst—
Hues of the breathing spirit, that resist
The crucible of words, where meaning dies!

Slowly they move about among the trees,
As though processionals of cherubim
Were come to earth to sing their morning hymn
Among the sandhills. Some will say that these
Were but effects of light upon the fog.
It may be so. Some say a tree's a log.

MORNING IS UP

Morning is up! The bush is all awake.
A swarm of myrtle warblers round me 'tchip,"
Gleaning from branch to branch and tip to tip.
Ruby-crowned kinglets move about the brake,
Scolding like busy housewives as they shake
Their nervous wings in flying skirts and skip
Hither and yon, in breathless haste, to clip
The grub from the cocoon and overtake

The thoughtless fly. Proud soloist in spring,
Now with one note to his melodious string,
Disconsolate amid the chattering host,
A blue-grey gnatcatcher sits pondering
A squirrel, grey as old Silenus' ghost,
Devouring scarlet mushrooms on a post.

THE BLUEBIRD

Silence has followed the departing throng;
The thirsty wilderness begins to parch,
When over me, in the cerulean arch,
I hear again the distant bluebird's song,—
Those lovely strains, that ever will belong
To lengthening northern days in early March,
When willow, maple, poplar, birch, and larch
Flush with the rising sap and winds grow strong.

O exiled bird! sing on the memories
Of singing waters and of singing trees;
Of witching hours with winter on the wing
And everything awakening to the spring;
Hepaticas among the sunny rocks
And your homecoming to the garden box.

THE PURPLE FINCH

Absorbed in memories of days long fled,
Beside the sunny path I sit and dream,
To hear a tinkling bell and then a stream
Of song inimitable overhead.
The purple finch! My eager eyes are led
Along his vaulting flight and catch the gleam
Of flaming color dropping to redeem
This bit of sandy road. When I am dead

Shall I forget his Junes of ecstasy
Amid the bloom of wild pears by the sea;
And the beloved, who hung upon his song!
Nay, they are sealed in the immortal throng
Who led life from a prison to a throne;
And he who taught them brings them to their own.

GOLDFINCHES

Goldfinches coming! Vaulting through the sky!

All whispering together, "How d'you do?"

"O just about as usual; how are you?"

"Sweet, sweet! quite well!" they twitter in reply.

I listen to their music; and I sigh.

From that late nest above the meadow rue,

With dappled August sunshine peeping through
The sheltering leaves, to this, is a far cry.

Gentlest of birds! faithful in fellowship!

Cradled in thistle down in infancy;

Fearless into unchartered space you dip

For your long journeying over land and sea;

And through so many nets of life you slip,

Where older heads than yours fail utterly.

Feb. 1.

FEBRUARY EVENING BEFORE RAIN

Heaven gives the sign—a sober neutral grey,
Thinned to cold yellows, with a smoky flare.

No sound disturbs the stillness of the air :
And the old earth pursues her sober way
Into the twilight of another day.

Things fall apart, stand rickety, and stare.

Man's newest work looks old and seems to wear
Its oldest clothes, weighted and smeared with clay.

And yet the mulberry dons its freshest green ;
And, clambering the pines, peeping between
Their branches, yellow jasmines smile and throw
A shower of kisses on my head below ;
While emerald live oaks, tender now and quick,
Glow as if in them one turned up a wick.

Feb. 2.

THE CALLING OF THE RAIN

All night I hear the calling of the rain,
From far-off places in the lonely wild,
Like the complaining of a little child.
Then it draws near and taps upon the pane,
And pattering through the pines is off again.
Hour after hour I hear its voices mild,
As though some subtle sorcery beguiled
The sleepy earth with its hypnotic strain.

It beats a sudden tattoo overhead ;
And then among the roses in their bed,
I hear it whispering, whispering, as they say
The spirits whisper to us when we pray.
Surely this is the spirit of something :
I verily believe it is the spring.

Feb. 2.

AFTER A RAIN

Of all the hours, I think the most divine
The early morning, following a rain,
When skies are an unsullied blue again.
Then, with new silver, leaf and petal shine.
The vibrant air is clear and crystalline
And sparkling in the sunshine like champagne.
The world once more is Eden without stain.
It is for me to seize and make it mine.

For, as the day wears on, the glories pass:
The freshness fades away from leaf and grass;
In heat and dust the working world grows stale;
And in the heart the morning rainbows pale.
But, for a moment, I have known, my dear,
The joy of heaven in a morning here.
Feb. 3.

PRESIDENT WILSON

He follows those whom he has sent before
By tens of thousands to the fields of France,
Who thought of death but as a circumstance,
Passing through it as through an open door,
Leaving behind them here, for evermore,
Youth, love, and comfort—for a broken lance.
Their work is done. Now the rear guard advance.
Their elders! who kept faith at home or tore
Honor to tatters for the filthy whore
Of profit dearly purchased. Death is naught.
It comes to those who fed and those who fought.
When night draws on, the only lasting fame
Is to have dipped the torch into the flame.
The ash may lie beneath an abbey stone
Or in a grave that men have marked "Unknown."
Feb. 5.

THE LATCH

One afternoon I went again to snatch
A visit with the birds upon the hill.
Alas! My friends were gone; the woods were still.
But, after waiting long, I heard the ratch
Of an old door, and clicking of a latch,—
The aimless rhythm of a fading will
That had been human; would be human still.
The pines were speaking, but I could not catch

The words. A medium lived there in his day.
Died there. They took him and his things away.
The house, deserted, knows few passersby.
Again that latch! as if it were tongue-tied,
Trying in vain to talk to things outside,
With the wind rising in a vacant sky!

Feb. 6.

BEAUTY STILL LOVED

Beauty still loved can separate at last!
Mistress inexorable she demands
All that we have of mind and heart and hands.
Those only win her secret who stand fast
Against the spell that even love may cast—
Spinning a spider's web of silken bands
To hold us docile in enchanted lands—
Lulling us with the music of the past,

And lotus eating; while uneasy dreams
Still trouble our drugged indolence with gleams
Of life's yet finer issues! Until one
Ariseth and goeth forth into the sun;
Given again in his own custody
To follow his inward mistress—Beauty!
Feb. 7.

GOING NORTH
INTERLUDE

HILLS

Haystacks and hills, upsloping fields and spires;
Lowlands and plowlands with their furrows brown;
Roads wandering heavenward, climbing up and down;
Hoarfrost and sparkles, with the smoke of fires!
How nature varies now in her attires;
How many a hat she wears, how many a gown,
Smiling and singing on her way to town!
I love this scholar look that she acquires;

The brisk deliberate walk into the day;
Mind poised above the heart, with a fine scorn
Of mingling tropically youth and age;
Clear-eyed, with no impatience of delay!
Song of the uplands, through a lengthening morn;
Joy of the boundless life and a clean page.

NORTH CAROLINA

From cypress to the maple, swift and clear,
The red flowers flashing in a crimson rain,
And trunks and branches dripping with the stain;
This is the cradle of the northern year.
Were I but out, the bluebirds I should hear;
The signs are showing they are back again.
North Carolina sister is to Maine
And her soft maples tell that spring is near.

A sober land, despite the giddy flush;
Living a life well-ordered and sedate;
With fields clean-tilled, up to the garden gate.
There is a soul in this deciduous hush;
A promise in the purple; winged desire,
Cleansed from the sensual and as fine as fire.

VIRGINIA

Still speeding north! The land begins to nod,
Drowsy with winter and the lessening day.
The cheerful southern tints give place to grey.
But on the soil there grows a natural sod—
This is Virginia's border gift to God,
To compensate for others on the way.
Moreover, in these lights there is a play
Of strange effects. Things that one moment plod
In dullness are transfigured while I gaze.
The heavens bloom first, in violet, green, and rose,
And hosts of flowers o'er the cloudbanks fly;
Then on the landscape shift the spectral rays;
Trees, shrubs, and herbs, their secret hearts disclose,
And earth repeats the gardens of the sky.
Feb. 8.

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATION IN NEW YORK

Out of the surge and clamor of the street,
Into the hush of these high corridors,
Where people thin along the quiet floors.
I hear above, in the dim vaults, the beat
And murmur of the great land come to greet
Their tired souls. Already o'er them soars
The continental sky; through open doors,
In organ tones, the winds on wingèd feet

Blow from illimitable distances,
Bearing the music of the forest trees,
The boom of cataracts and whispering foam.
The mountains call—far in the deepening night,
Across a thousand leagues of candlelight.
I hear their voices. I am going home.
Feb. 27.

FLORIDA

MARCH

THE PURPLE MARTINS

This third of March, the purple martins' notes
Are chuckling round the cote and chimney stack.
We needed not, to tell us spring is back,
The liquid music of their bubbling throats;
From every garden in the village floats
The song of birds; the very biddies clack
In nuptial strains. Yet in the airy track
Of these Hirundinidian packetboats
There flies the rumor—Spring's a large affair;
And, while our wireless broadcasts through the air
Sermons and concerts, politics and stocks,
Some other radio tells the wandering flocks
They have domestic duties to fulfil,
And brings these early builders from Brazil.
March 3.

THE TRADE WINDS

When morning trades are blowing from the east,
And every bough is waving in the swell;
When there are sparkles in the air like yeast,
And life goes ringing as a marriage bell;
I sing and dig around my orchard trees,
Shouting a greeting to the passerby,
While orange blossoms scent the humming breeze,
And giddy birds go sliding down the sky.
O spinning world of winds and spinning vanes,
Where madcap children race at noon from school,
And colts go round the fields with flying manes,
It's hard for poets not to play the fool!
You are today in such a whirligig
That even sonnets step out in a jig.
March 7.

MESSAGES

One Sunday afternoon, as it befell,
In a pavilion set among the trees,
A medium was delivering messages
From relatives deceased, who came to tell
Their relatives on earth to buy and sell,
Marry and travel, work or live at ease;
Sometimes they gave extensive pedigrees
And spoke of living on in heaven or hell

Or astral regions in the middle air.
Meanwhile, the pines were murmuring outside,
And orange blossoms sent a honeyed tide
Over a world now growing wondrous fair.
Spring beckoned in the heart of a live oak
And from the height of heaven someone spoke.
March 8.

MARCH AND THE ANCIENT GOLD

March! and the ancient oaks are turned to gold,
Slowly effacing, thinning, through a screen,
That daily grows into a living green.
The bushes in the scrub look grey and old
As though some wasting sickness through them rolled;
And yet, despite this doomed and deathly mien,
The glow of health returning may be seen,
And buds and sprays of tender life unfold.

Thus speaks anew the ancient oracle
And life performs its annual miracle.
Across the desert steals the breath divine
And hidden waters turn to living wine;
The old root feels the power that quickeneth
And youth smiles through the fading face of death.
Mar. 9.

WHITE ROSES

She brought white roses dripping with the rain.

All day in storm they had been buffeted

And holding them before my face, she said,—

“How beautiful they are; sing them again!”

Alas! I knew that sorrow and its pain.

Many within her outer courts have plead,

But who the face of beauty ever read,

Much less her secret unto men made plain!

I gazed upon the rose and saw the tear:

Then closer to the mystery drew near,—

That rose light came from a far dwelling place

To which each blossom ever turned her face

Yearning towards it with her soul's pure thirst.

A saint may know what a white rose knows first.

Mar. 11.

CROCUSES

Pure slender forms, erect and virginal!

I have seen shining in the human face,

Where winter has left many a rugged trace,

The spirit's similar processional—

The crocus beauty creeping over all.

The same new, slender, lovely lines of grace;

The morning tints that seem to have no place

On earth, but ever to the mortal eye recall

Another world, where everything is young.

To-day, from there, some radiant soul has flung

A window open on this starry plain,

For a young god appearing, who has hung

His banner in the sky like April rain

And speaks in beauty to the world again.

Mar. 16.

INCENSE

Mark well these blistering stretches of white sand,
Dotted with scraggly, thorny, leathery things—
Unloveliest of nature's changelings.
It is, in very truth, a no-man's land.
And yet, its unpropitious courts are fanned
By winds that come to it on priestly wings
To bear aloft its simple offerings.
Incense ariseth now on every hand—

The distillation of the choicest gums.
From every humble bush the oblation comes.
The essence of its poverty is prayer;
And this is wafted heavenward on the air,
Perfumed beyond a monarch's wanton price;
The desert's tribute unto Paradise.
Mar. 18.

AFTERNOON SILENCE

This afternoon the silence was so deep,
Unconsciously the conversation fell
As we came under the hypnotic spell
And first began to wonder, then to creep,
As though we feared to waken things from sleep,
Where no sleep is; but rosy buds that swell,
With ceaseless industry in every cell;
High-tensioned waves of light and heat that leap

Through fields invisible, from tip to tip,
Accomplishing in chemistries terrene
The mysteries of the intangible.
These butterflies that through the picture slip,
Writing white magic on the flickering screen,
Are signs of silence now made visible.
Mar. 22.

LIFE IN ITS OCTAVES

Life in its octaves is a wondrous thing.

Gazing at my nasturtiums in their bed,
Noting the glories of the colors spread,
The flaming chords at last begin to sing,
Upon the verge of vision vanishing.

About the nimbus of each radiant head,
A new harmonic trembles in their stead,
A new response in me awakening,

And some fresh sense beyond the field of sight
Tunes to the higher rhythms of the light.

So life in motion slips from bar to bar,
In spectral time, whose movements secular
Outfly the present hour's experience,
But may be normal in a future tense.
Mar. 24.

THE SOUTHERN NIGHT

The southern night has like a pansy blushed;
Close to the earth the heavy petals lie;
No subtle craftsman skilled in Tyrian dye
Such royal purple from the murex crushed;
No sorrow unappeased was ever hushed
By such an anodyne as this soft sky.
The golden evening star, with pensive eye,
Upon the damask west most deeply flushed

Sheds golden tears. I watch each as it falls,
Until within some waiting cup it's caught,
And from the bloom the lovely stain is dried.
It is as though the gentle night recalls
Some ancient happy ending, like the thought
Of faithful lovers who for love have died.
Mar. 26.

THE RETICENCE OF BEAUTY

The face of nature everywhere is fair.
The humblest thing is haunted by desires
And to some native loveliness aspires.
Dresses of grey-green silk the sand dunes wear,
With butterflies and orchids in their hair.
The marshes, factory-faced, when day expires,
Burn, like the Muses, with celestial fires,
And to the eternal music witness bear.
The rhythm of beauty moves from star to clod,
Prodigal, flaunting, wanton as the rose,
Ready with each new petal to disclose
Fresh perils of desire for the mart.
And yet I find in all things at their heart,
Beauty is still as reticent as God.
March 27.

THERE COMES A MOMENT

There comes a moment in the long-drawn day,
When suddenly the temperature cools,
And little winds awaken on the pools
Adown the shadowy streams to make their way.
Our cares, earthborn, relinquish then their sway,
And we forget the teaching of the schools.
The fairies beckon from their painted stools
To come and join them in their dusky play.
Strange birdlike forms arise beneath our feet
To vanish somewhere in the lessening light
On wings invisible. It is the hour
When our freed spirits walk refreshed to greet,
Along the borders of the day and night,
The omens of a new world and its power.
March 28.

THE END OF LIFE

The end of life is not serenity,
But stormy winds, wild weather, melting snow;
Brooks flooded, seaward going; afterglow
Drenching with splendors of felicity
The adolescent earth, now restlessly
Dreaming the short nights through; to wake and
show
Pubescent willows and the sap in flow.
These are the stirring thoughts that come to me,

As I sit by the paling winter fires;
Hearing above me in the dark the choirs
Of murmuring multitudes now homeward bound,
With sense unerring, on unfaltering wing,
Following the ancient trails through heights profound
To be the first to usher in the spring.

March 31.

NORTHERN APRIL

APRIL MADNESS

Smoke of spirit campfires on the open downs,
Tang of wild sap wafted on the breeze;
Powerful incantations working far from towns,
Someone making medicine in trees.
Quick-a-look! There's something moving in the grove!
Only brown leaves whirling on the floor;
With a fox sparrow singing to his Indian love,
On their way to lonely Labrador.

Bank and thicket quiver in the silent heat:
Watch the silver shuttle of the stream:
Don't you hear the piping and the beat of feet!
Through the maples catch their dusky gleam,
Dancing wildly where the winds and waters meet!
April is the madness of a dream.
April 1.

THE SONG OF BIRDS

The song of birds is on the April air;
The robin carols in the budding tree;
The meadow lark beside the sapphire sea;
And from the sunny depths of thickets bare
The song sparrows are piping everywhere
The dearest note of all the choir to me,
"O sweet, sweetheart! Love and live cheerily!
"Come share our joys and cast away your care!"

Aye, and I will. The song is in my heart.
I know a joy to madness near allied,
And I must sing and love with all the rest.
'Tis April! April! And I am a part
Of this invincible resurgent tide,
When life is up and urgent for the quest.

HUNGRY FOR THE NEW GRASS

Hungry for the new grass silvering in the sun;
Pocket mirrors flashing on the green;
Mercury-footed streamlets shouting as they run;
Everywhere the glance, the smile, the sheen.

Brown woods, clean woods, wet with leafy mats,
Bearing still the print of lingering snow;
Through the drowsy clearing clouds of dreaming gnats
On a golden sea of pollen blow.

Pussy willows, catkins, ruddy maple flowers,
Early yellow crowfoot in the bogs;
Children's tears and laughter in the passing showers,
Lazy turtles sunning on the logs.
Silent clocklike shadows telling off the hours:
Listen to the chorus of the frogs!
New York, Easter Sunday, April 20.

MEADOW LARKS

"Tsee-ah! Tsee-ee! Tsee-ee! You can't see me!"
As fur and feather grow to match the ground,
So everywhere in nature is there found
This finely modulated harmony.
The insect takes its color from the tree
And meadows find their voices in the sound
Of unseen larks—the element profound—
The singing note of their green mystery.

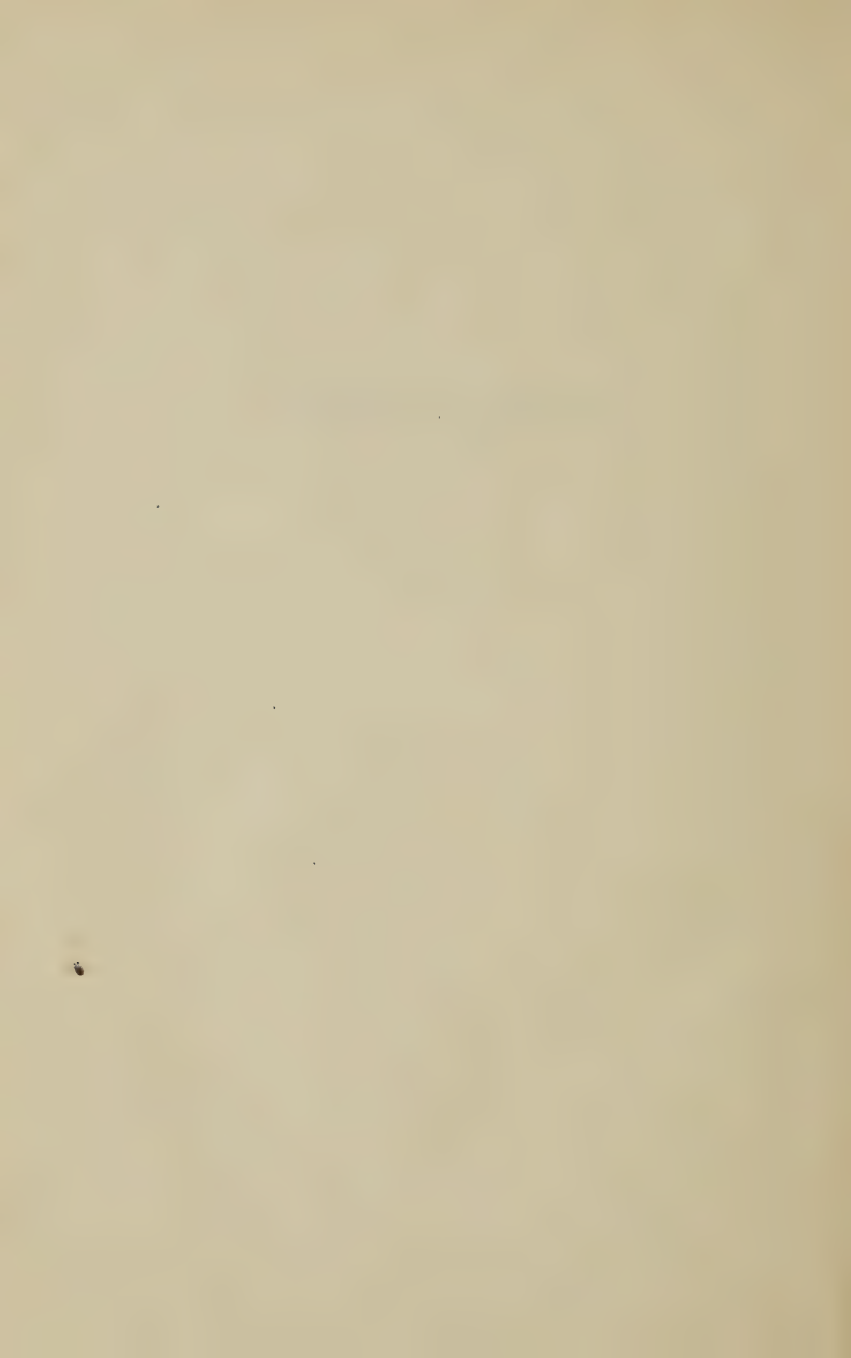
Sweet as a home, these fields, and yet homeless;
Tender, but all unsheltered in the dark;
They sigh away into horizons far,
With plaintive songs that echo their distress
In dying cadences, to reach their mark
And end their wanderings in the evening star.
April 24.

RECOLLECTION

O happy, happy days of memory,
When through the woods we wandered side by side,
Watching the mating birds together glide
In love's abandonment from tree to tree,
Tuning their first sweet nuptial minstrelsy;
While the red earth lay like a waiting bride,
Her bosom bared in palpitating pride
To her liege lord's most tender lechery!

What golden days upon the calendar,
Quenching all others in their burning light,
Interpreting all nature by the right
Of love divine for ever to confer
Through the blest wisdom of his second sight
His attributes to all who minister.
April 28.

NEW BRUNSWICK



MAY

WHEN THE NOR'WESTER

When the nor'wester is humming through spaces,
Sweeping the last wisp of cloud from the sky,
Then the sea villages harden their faces,
Austere and angular, brilliant and dry.

Gone with the mist is the picture romantic,
Cobalt and silver and sapphire are hurled
Over the floors of the level Atlantic,
Clear to the uttermost parts of the world.

Here from the top of the hill I behold you,
High-lighted, sky-lighted, wind-swept and driven,
What though no softness of spring now enfold you,
Who shall deny you the beauty that's shriven
Clean of illusion! Then let the wind mould you;
Much has it taken but more has it given.

May 8.

THE WHITE LIGHTS OF THE NORTH

The white lights of the north! A silver sky,
Low vaulted, stretching to horizons wide;
A wind that whips the foam across the tide
And sends the gulls like snowflakes whirling by!
White houses in the pallid clearings lie,
Or blanched upon the open hills deride
The elements. Along the countryside
The stony roads meander on to die

Among the barren fields. A flickering world
Of hoary granite, birch, and evergreen;
Urging its breasts with scanty covering.
Over it yesterday the blizzards swirled;
To-day it is chemised in linen sheen,
With violets, in honor of the spring.

May 9.

APOCALYPSE

Now on the world the sudden sunset flares
Like a great jeweled window in a church,
Flooding the budding aisles of beech and birch.
The plowman in his furrow stands and stares,
With slackened rein, behind his weary mares,
Forgetting all the long day's strain and lurch.
In awe his wondering eyes, uplifted, search
The heaven that bursts upon him unawares,—

Meadows enamelled with the fairest flowers;
A crystal stream that through them gently flows,
From quiet hills, wherein it had its birth;
A far-off city with its walls and towers
All tinted with the softest pearl and rose;
And angels ministering to men on earth.
May 10.

WHEN IT SHOULD STILL BE NIGHT

When it should still be night the morning comes;
Not with the trumpet's blare and roll of drums,
But a strange brightness in the farthest north,
Where none expects the sun to issue forth.
Like a clear thought upon a troubled mind
It holds until the darkness is refined
From azure to the crystalline of light,
And, long before the sun, there is no night.
Perchance the sense of immortality
Grows thus upon the soul's immensity
From that fixed north, that ever sundereth
The earthly cycle known as birth and death.
There, where the midnight stars forever trail,
The hidden glory lifts the sombre veil.
May 11.

TARDY SPRING

Not as the poets have so often sung,
Returns this tardy fluctuating spring;
In veils of mist instead of blossoms hung,
And silent, when the vocal woods should ring.

Where are the balmy zephyrs that should blow!
Cradled, I hope, within some downy nest.
Far otherwise these winds with threats of snow,
Whether they blow from out the east or west.

Flowers there are, but sadly out of place,
Shivering and tossing in their open bed
In nakedness; each turns away its face
Dejectedly and hangs its pretty head.
But still the wind, relentless, brings the rain
And both together buffet them again.

May 12.

CONSIDER THE LILIES

With ropes of pearl upon her wrist,
The birch tree leans above the row
Where clumps of lilies hourly grow.
Along the hillside trails the mist
In veils of blue and amethyst;
Below, the grey-green waters flow,—
All mysteries no man may know,
Beyond the fact that they exist.

Beside the birch I stand and stare,
Chilled by the unpropitious air,
Watching the lengthening spikes unfold
Regardless of the sunless cold,
Urged by no prophet's voice or rod—
The vital miracle of God.

May 13.

THE SPRING OF DREAMS

The spring of dreams is a romance
Of shining suns and passing showers
And laughing meadows gay with flowers,
Where children round the maypole dance,
And lovers spend in dalliance
The long, enchanted, golden hours,
With piping birds in budding bowers.
All these are but a circumstance.

Here in the north the hardy spring
Is quite a sterner braver thing;
A battle waged at heavy cost,
Where fields are won and fields are lost;
And life to live must pay the price
Of endless toil and sacrifice.
May 14.

YOUNG FLOWERS

An unseen wind runs by and bends the necks
Of these young flowers to kiss them on the cheek—
They are so fair, so fragile, and so meek,
And yet it does not seem their souls to vex.
The wooing light their slender figures decks
In lovely raiment, queens may vainly seek:
They smile in wonder, but they do not speak.
This ardent ministry does not perplex

Their innocence but bubbling o'er with fun
They dance and flutter gaily hand in hand
The live-long day. The world seems wondrous
kind.

But as they turn their faces to the sun
So trustfully—I do not understand—
It almost seems as if the dears were blind.

May 15.

THE NORTHERN PLOWMAN

Under a brooding sky, with winds asleep,
Weeping at intervals in gentle rain,
Laboriously he plows the soil again.
The starving cold for months has bitten deep;
Now freed reluctantly from winter's keep
The stiffened clods turn slowly, as in pain,
Upon the granite bed where they have lain.
A gradual warmth will daily through them creep,
For a brief season. Here he plants his seed.
The earth gives grudgingly, he knows the cost,—
Drought, blight, and vermin; late and early frost.
The odds are great; but greater still his creed.
His fathers knew no other world and won;
And where they harvested now sows their son.
May 16.

WHITE VIOLETS

While still the world is rough with winter's debts,
And May peeps shyly as a dappled fawn
Across the dewy grass at break of dawn,
What pilgrim of the new life ere forgets
The joy upspringing or the tear that wets
His cheek unchallenged, when his eyes are drawn
To the new frost sprinkled upon his lawn,
Telling him that the sweet white violets

Have bloomed. Come let us go to Bethlehem
And kneel before a cradled light so pure
We may but kiss the pearls upon its hem,
And marvel at the love that could immure
The Life of Life upon so small a stem,
For He blooms for us here in miniature.
May 17.

DOORSTEP GARDEN

A blue door in a sunny southern wall;
Violas azure-tinted like the skies;
Red-damasked primroses with birdlike eyes;
And honey-scented, best beloved of all,
The starry crowns of candytuft that call
To their full cups the earliest bee that flies.
The heaven of childhood in their faces lies,
As on their little doorstep garden fall

The gentle sunbeams through a watered air,
Breaking above them in prismatic cloud,
Like a divine Shekinah hovering there.
It is as though the moment were endowed
With insight into mysteries so fair,
As scarce to mortal eyes to be allowed.
May 18.

CORONATION

Clad loosely in a homespun woolen smock,
With heather tints of purple, green, and gray,
Now sits uncrowned the young queen of the May,
Beside a lichened, weather-beaten rock.
Around her in the pasture graze her flock,
While young lambs leap unsteadily in play.
Softly she sings and dreams the hours away.
The marshall wind to-morrow will unlock

The waiting blossoms on the orchard trees
And fling their perfume to the herald breeze.
Sweet innocents will carpet o'er the ground
And then, 'mid choiring birds, she will be crowned.
Hark! from the hollow woods the partridge drums,—
"Behold her Majesty! She comes! She comes!"
May 19.

THE MAY MOON

Now Artemis from heaven, throned in light,
Leans pensively, with slender hand, to trace
Her moving line upon the dial's face,
Marking the silent hours in their flight.
Upon the promontories, glimmering white,
The vestal birches, veiled in budding lace,
Watch as old Ocean pours his silver vase
In huge libation, on earth's nuptial night ;

While Venus on her altar in the west
Kindles the sacred hymeneal fire,
Scattering its flakes upon the moving breast
Of many floods, as the batrachian choir,
Oldest in art to bring its offering,
Sings once again the serenade of spring.
May 20.

THE GREAT DAY

This is the Messianic day of days,
Though on the calendar it has no name,
And none the forecast of its hour may claim.
Neither faintheartedness nor time's delays
Can bar its certitude. At first the haze!
And then, at noon, out of the south there came
A sudden whirlwind, borne on wings of flame.
A wind with banners flying, in a blaze
Of vernal hues descending to adorn
Forest and meadow, copse and growing corn ;
The glowing vestures of the sky were rife
With all the prophesies of coming life.
So yearly, in a quickening whirl of heat,
Heaven gives the sign that earth will soon repeat.
May 21.

OVER THE CANADIAN PACIFIC

EVENING IN THE WILDERNESS

Now once again the ancient forest trees
Swiftly before our wondering eyes unfold
The dim rich splendors of old tapestries—
Red-brown and purple, pink and flaming gold.

It seems almost as though the year returns
To autumn when the hues of death are rife;
But through the paler vernal pageant burns
The quickening fires of returning life.

Grey is the sky above the world in bud,
And grey and sad the mist that through it blows;
Cold are the greens as any glacial flood;
White are the blossoms as the drifted snows.
But, through them all, the ruddy flush of blood
Tells where the sap invigorating flows.
May 23.

DAYBREAK ON MOOSEHEAD LAKE

At first there flashed a pallid sulphur flare,
With bare twigs webbed as wire on a dome.
Slowly it grew and deepened into chrome
Pellucidly dissolving everywhere
Through the illimitable heights of air,—
A gradual of color, gnome on gnome,
Adding to spatial concept, till the foam
Touched earth. Then, with intolerable glare,

Above the darkened mountain's wooded crest,
A lambent disc arose upon the world.
Across the lake the flying splendor came
And reached the clouds now gathered in the west,
Smiting their mighty bases till they curled
In spouting leagues of unappeasing flame.
May 24.

SPRING MORNING AT MONTREAL

Of all my sins of judgment I repent,
For past experience leaves me still untaught,
And prophecy in its own net is caught,
When such a day as this at last is sent
And all the treasures of the spring are spent
On one picture. The south wind came unsought,
And in a night the transformation wrought;
Blowing the cloud from heaven like a tent;

And then there came the subtle, joyful thing—
Morning and laughter—that we call the spring.
An air that soothes the cheek like a caress;
Beauty that wears the bloom of wistfulness;
Life rushing into youth in shining throngs,
And silent places bursting into songs!

THE PLAINS OF QUEBEC

Fair are the plains of emerald deep and lush,
That now in silence, softly breathing, lie
Beneath the open wooing of the sky.
Over the growing landscape falls a hush.
And in the palpitating air a flush
Of tenderness, as though to earth drew nigh
Something invisible to human eye.
Within the light and heat there is the rush

And commerce of a spirit that revives
The dormant impulse in these lesser lives.
Eternal, immanent, creative source
Of every form and every quickening force;
Its presence, indivisible and one
Is manifest to-day in this May sun.

BARREN LAND

Now comes the transit from the green to grey;
The fertile plains give way to barren land,
With all its outcrop of rough stone and sand;
Where sapling poplars tardily display
Their yellow leaves—for even here 'tis May.
Upon the hill the quiet cattle stand,
And, two bright spots of color, hand in hand,
A boy and girl go wandering away.

The air is fresh and still; the clouds asleep;
The towering sky immeasurably deep;
And over all the dreaming world's expanse
There flows the flowering tide of spring's advance.
Life joyfully its purposes fulfills
When boys and girls go Maying o'er the hills.

AFTERNOON

The blue has turned to silver in the heat;
The farms look southern, with their eyes asquint
In the strong sunlight and the dazzling glint,
Like quicksilver, from every metal sheet,
New roof, and pasture rock. With measured beat
The black crow flies. The brooks are now a mint
Of gold coined by the crowfoot without stint
To lay in gratitude before the feet

Of the refreshing waters as they flow
Amid the clumps of cool translucent green.
Cold were they yesterday, when skies were grey
But welcome now, when dust begins to blow
Behind the harrows, in a drifting screen,
And hills are hazy with the heat of May.

STRANGE IS IT NOT

Strange is it not, after a perfect day,
The silent evening should be dull and blind;
As if capricious nature changed her mind
And putting off her festival array
Sackcloth and ashes donned without delay,
Hoping by show of penitence to find
Relief or absolution of some kind.
Such musings from the truth are apt to stray.

She knows no penitence; admits no flaw;
Balance, with her, the universal law.
These mists are born of her own life and heat,
And, slowly rising, wear in their retreat
The lovely memory of the noonday hues
To shine as rainbows in the morning dews.
May 24.

ONTARIO

The changing landscapes of the spring are full
Of tender pictures of her infancies,
And modest, soft-cheeked adolescences.
Throughout the cycle of the miracle,
From pussy willow to the new lamb's wool,
There runs a subtle scale of harmonies—
Transient and silver-toned pubescences.
The tasselled poplars and adorable
Hepaticas' shy bloom in sunny nooks;
The hoary woods at first are clothed with down
Soft as a chick's, that floats on every breeze.
The ferns all wear it on their shepherd's crooks,
Among their flocks; and now a woolly crown
Of silver green rests on the apple trees.
May 25.

PORTAGE, WISCONSIN

The morning green strikes a percussive note
As resonant as a piano string.
Up from the frosty meadow carolling
The lusty bobolink in shining coat
Shakes out the bubbling music from his throat,
And from the growing marsh, on scarlet wing,
Begins the blackbird bugler answering.
Mingled with misty incense, heavenward float

The reveilles; and, swiftly in reply,
A primrose dawn suffuses all the sky.
A cool wind through the shivering poplars flies,
Sweeps like a shadow o'er the grass, and dies;
And ponderous cattle rise to graze anew,
Powdered with rainbows in the morning dew.
May 27.

CHICAGO

Like a huge village in the silver haze,
Across the plain her tranquil contours poise
Against an eggshell sky and naught destroys
Her peaceful beauty in the morning rays.
The light absorbs her as a cloud—a phase
Of prairie landscape, level, green, turquoise;
Old rose and pearl of distance. It employs
Candid necessity and weaves a maze

Of shining wires, converging overhead,
Into a gorgeous silver spider's web,
Distended heavenward before her gates;
With moorings o'er the teeming planet spread:
Where at the center of the net, a bleb,
Hour after hour, the silent spider waits.
May 28.

FACTORY TOWN

The sunset falls upon a faded page
Of music faintly scored in red and black
By factory tower and pencilled chimney stack;
Like an old missal dim and grey with age
Through which there floats some echo to assuage
Our poignant modern grief and give us back,
Above the task, the song we sadly lack.
This reverie holds neither fret nor rage,

Only a quiet drift across the bars,
Of some melodious measure, half the thought,
And half the song of a fine soul's release;
Through which, at intervals, peep out the stars,
Like farther notes in the same measure caught—
The overtones of the eternal peace.
South Chicago, May 29.

SABBATH ON LAKE ONTARIO

Sapphire and silver, with the faintest lip
To separate the water from the sky;
The surface whitened by no sail of ship;
Stained by no smudge of steamer passing by.
No little clouds across its quiet slip;
No soaring seafowl circle it on high.
Only the blue and white tree swallows dip
Along the grasses where the ripples die.

Sapphire and silver, Zion of our peace;
Reposing on the everlasting wings;
A city not of buildings but of light,
Whose harmony with spirit brings release;
Where beauty is the fluent law of things
And Sabbath rest is in the swallow's flight.
May 30.

LILACS

When dandelions blow their airy clocks,
Young June comes walking down the leafy ways,
And all the world is filled with tossing sprays
Of white and purple lilacs. Grazing flocks,
Zigzagging fences, stumps, and pasture rocks
Repeat their colors in a sunlit blaze
Of lilac bloom and lilac-tinted haze.
Even the terraced clouds in mountain blocks,

Ranged round the shining valleys of the sky,
Are rainy sweet, with tender lilac hues;
And from the summits of their sailing towers
Unto the lilac-haunted earth reply;
Ready from secret fountains to transude
The beauty of their purple into flowers.
May 30.

SUNSET ON THE ST. LAWRENCE

Clear brimming green; with rapid stride; immense;
This flood immeasurable seaward pours,
And now at sunset all its moving floors
Are shining opal, in magnificence
Appalling; words before it lose their sense.
The planet slides between far-sundered shores
In glorious raiment; while above it soars
Another glory of the sky—intense

Serene, and rayless flame, so pure and deep,
The heart of heaven blooms as a golden rose.
And merged in this supernal clarity
Of substance opening ever inwardly
Into the light of life in its repose,
The spirits of the earth-delivered sweep.
May 31.

NEW BRUNSWICK

JUNE

TULIPS

Upon our spring, so hesitant and grey,
The tulips march like gaudy grenadiers,
And all cry out at sight of them, "Three cheers!
"Hip, hip, hooray! Tulips! Hip, hip, hooray!
"You give us courage and you make us gay.
"Now let your merry music greet our ears!
"Tis time that we made up our long arrears!"
And so with fife and drum they lead the way

To greet the summer, with their banners flying,
And all the flowers following and vieing
To match them with a braver uniform,
Until the riot takes the fields by storm.
From balconies the leaves all rush to look,
And our dull world becomes a picturebook.
June 1.

THIS VITAL AIR

This vital air I breathe unconsciously,
Straining its substance through a silken mesh
Into the blood stream that sustains my flesh.
But there are other gifts it brings to me,—
The beauty of its luminosity,—
Voices and songs, the scent of flowers fresh,
Its soothing touch, and viewless tides that thresh
The foaming reaches of the aerial sea.

These are the finer forms of its largesse,
Essential parts of the stupendous whole
Sweeping forever into consciousness,
And bearing us towards the final goal,
Where man's first sign of transitoriness
Becomes the very essence of his soul.
Whit Sunday, June 2.

EARLY JUNE GARDEN

Now our perennials lift their stately domes
As beautiful as when they later bear
Their load of blossoms, but already there
The dielytra hangs her bleeding combs
And all day long among the pendants roams
That indefatigable voyager,
The bumble bee, seeking his honeyed fare.
Broidered along the outer fringes foams

The iberis, in densely flowered mats,
White as the lime when it is newly quenched;
With pansies coming to their prime, and drenched
In all the colors in the dyers' vats;
While best-beloved, most charming of the lot,
Drifts through them all the blue forget-me-not.
June 3.

NEIGHBOUR JONES

Why do you keep on going, neighbour Jones;
Fixing up things as if they could not wait;
At it so early, staying on so late;
Whetting a dull knife on so many hones;
Sit down awhile and rest your poor old bones;
You'll never see these when you pass the gate,
And can't take with you any real estate,
When you lie down beneath the graveyard stones.

As for the children, why as like as not,
They'll streak to town and leave it all to rot.
Quoth neighbour Jones, "My friend! you eat the
rind.
"I do these things to exercise my mind.
"And calculate on taking everything;
"Leaving behind only the scaffolding."
Jan. 4.

DIELYTRA

Where do you get so many bleeding hearts;
Hanging by twenties in their crimson rows?
Are they the gory trophies of your foes;
Or valentines that tell of all the smarts
You have inflicted by your deadly arts?
Or valentines that tell of all the smarts
To the sharp anguish and the muted woes
Of all the honey-probing Cupid's darts!

Nay, I do think that our dear mother earth,
That has received so many hearts that bleed—
Soldiers and lovers of humanity—
When spring returns, has brought these flowers to
birth,
Conceived of all her old heroic seed,
And holds them thus in her fond memory.

June 5.

OLD AGE

To-night the upturned Plow hangs overhead,
Still pointing to the Pole Star riding high;
And in the fields well-night untenanted
A few dim stars alone possess the sky;
A few dim stars drowned in unwonted light
That has eclipsed the rest of their bright throng,
And sown instead a stellar dust so bright
Its ripples flow from seeing into song.

Old age is but a summer night as brief;
Merged in the lingering and returning day,
With memory to quench the fading grief,
And dawn already hastening on the way.
What then, if for the moment, thoughts grow dim,
Between the evening and the morning hymn.

June 6.

WILD CHERRY

Fogs from the ghostly sea, sepulchral, raw,
Day after day in endless silence drift
Over the buried lands and never lift;
Swallowing all seasons in their hungry maw.
June on the calendar. They know no law;
Efface all beauty; and bestow no gift.
Even as I speak, within the aimless shift,
A hand invisible begins to draw

Pure, slender lines, that vanish and return;
Then, rapidly, as one completes a tale,
Blossoming crowns, with stamen rays that burn
In stellar fires, cold as the mist and pale;
Seraphic hosts that, for a day sojourn
In cherry trees in bloom within the veil.
June 7.

THE DARK ROAD

Stumbling along a rutted pasture lane,
With friendly stars to light me overhead,
I heard the brook singing within its bed.
Then came the dark wood with its sad refrain,
Sighing and crying as of souls in pain:
But far within, singing with certain tread,
I heard the brook, and I was comforted.
From this, the traveled highway, broad and plain,

For a brief space beneath the open sky,
With cheerful greetings from the passers-by.
And still the brook, to riper measure grown,
Somewhere near by, sang on in monotone.
At last the covered bridge; no sky or star;
And there I heard the tide passing the bar.
June 8.

APPLE BLOSSOM

What masterpiece of beauty these domed trees,
Close-packed with blossoms to their very peak;
All plump and rosy as a maiden's cheek;
Scenting the air with their felicities!
What tropic memory can vie with these?
Lovely the orange bloom, but pale and meek;
Magnolias fulsome; to the Doric Greek
Of these snow-cupped, tender austerities.

How vain in words to seek to render this
Magnificent florescence of the life
That hastens from the slumber to the fruit;
And in its silent passing prints a kiss
So luminous and with assurance rife,
That nature in her certitude is mute.
June 9.

JUNE LEAVES

I have lived out another year to see,
Day after day, life dexterously spread,
In deepening light and shadow overhead,
The marvel of its leafy canopy,
Until the task was finished. Simile
No added light upon the work can shed:
It may be witnessed; never can be read.
He who has walked beneath the mystery
Of this investiture of the hills and seen
The wilderness of living things grow green
And clothe itself with leaves—beyond the plan,
Or understanding, or the help of man;
Like Thomas, has beheld a miracle,
Absent, he would have deemed incredible.
June 10.

SYMMETRY

If one in symmetry a pleasure takes,
 June in his flower garden is the norm—
 If haply it escapes the early worm.
Before the ordered plots are marred by stakes,
Or foliage too rankly nourished breaks
 Under the riot of the thunderstorm,
 The growing plant attains its perfect form.
Now every morning when the gardener wakes,

He looks with pleasure on the sculptured art
Nature displays, in which he had a part.
 Were there no flowers he would be content
 To see life fashion thus its lineament.
And yet how many are there who descant
Upon the blossoms, and forget the plant.
June 13.

TRIVIAL THINGS

There's so much truth in trivial things;
 The atoms that compose our path;
 The prism in the dewdrop bath;
The music plucked from humble strings;
The pebbles smooth in shepherds' slings
 That overtopple in their wrath
 All the Goliaths out of Gath,
And bring to naught their blusterings.

A distant star shot out a ray,
That travelled far upon its way,
 And still was undiscovered;
 Until a man sat in the dark
 And in a camera caught the spark
 And a new world uncovered.
June 14.

CHECKERED SUNLIGHT

Into the stillness of the daylight gloom,
All silently the slanting sunbeams pour,
In checkered squares across the polished floor;
And weave unceasingly as in a loom
Mysterious patterns of a shadowy bloom,
Coming and going lightly evermore,
Repeating the same motives o'er and o'er.
It is as though there fell into the room

The shadows of a dreamer's reveries,
Sun-steeped, and in a finer texture caught —
A living, moving, elemental stream,
Wherein the thinker makes his traceries,
And weaves the semblance, and, perchance, the
thought —
The golden fabric of an endless dream.

June 15.

NARCISSUS HAS DEPARTED

Narcissus has departed from the hills.
No more shall I his slender beauty spy,
Till Boreas returns with Alpine sky
To wake with laughter rude the sleeping rills
And blow the trumpets of the daffodils.
Last of his lovely train, the Pheasant's Eye
And Odorata linger as a sigh
In shady nooks, until the lilac spills

Its drowsy perfume on the languid night.
Then, with her starry lover, Spring takes flight.
But when the flickering boughs and swelling buds
Once more are mirrored in the silver floods,
They will come walking through the sun and showers;
And every glance be born again in flowers.

June 16.

PILGRIM AND PRINCESS

Here am I, a pilgrim, groping;
Who can read me this new wonder,
Camped beside me, far asunder!
I, with pathway upward sloping,
Ever journeying, ever hoping!
Here in lilacs, purple thunder;
Bees all golden with their plunder;
Bending boughs with new leaves roping

Tents for summer revelries!
Who can bridge the gulf between us,
Whisper words to make me tarry,
Pledge me to the mysteries?
Lift the baffling veils that screen us;
Pilgrim to the princess marry?

June 18.

LILACS AT SUNSET

Raising my eyes above my cup of tea,
I saw a flock of lilacs in their flight,
Outside the window in the evening light.
The vision came upon me suddenly,
The lucent splendor of that changing sea
Of stainless azure, fathomless and bright,
Deepening into the thoughtfulness of night!
And there, clearcut, against its purity,

Erect and poised, forthreaching to the west,
The level sunshine on each modelled breast.
Such birds of Paradise as never flew
Their rose and purple on a sunset blue!
Dull is the spirit to the sense of awe,
But far into the crystal then I saw.

June 19.

THE REBEL

Sullen from years of brooding discontent,
He balked one day at his last overload,
Smashed through his jingling harness, kicked the
 goad,
Broke loose from all his old environment,
And on a bee line out to freedom went.
Eschewing henceforth any fixed abode,
He took the largesse of the open road;
Annexing at a stroke a continent,—

Mountains and hills and plains with all their treasure.
Nature was prodigal, and gave good measure.
And there in a new youth he went to school,
 Exchanging harness, grain, and stable ties,
 For the large fellowship of earth and skies;
And those who knew him said he was a fool.
June 21.

LUPINS

Soft as the blowing of a summer flute,
Where music sinks into the sense of touch;
And even this at length is overmuch
For that last finer flower where sense is mute,
And yearning lips, for ever in pursuit
Of the intangibly elusive, clutch
At essences familiar; even such
Are these dim spires in their mild salute,—

A blue so soft, it fades into a cloud
And catches sunshine in a downy net
To make it speak in drowsy labials;
Then with a flash turns to a smile so proud,
So kissing, that the garden is beset,
With aureoles of the celestials.
June 22.

JUNE MUSIC

Music is ever on the lips of June.

I hear it as a sighing whisper pass
At morn, across the fields of growing grass;
Then, lifting hillwards, croon an ancient rune;
Till some hid chorister, from his tribune,
Leads the cathedral forest in high mass,
To pealing organ and resounding brass,
While all things living, with their Lord, commune.

And, last, when evening steals o'er sea and land,
Upon the watch towers of the loftiest spires,
Between the setting and the rising sun,
Like holy angels, hermit thrushes stand,
And with celestial voices, in full choirs,
Sing vespers, compline,—and then orison.

June 23.

MATURITY

The land has broadened in maturity:

The rocky hillsides stripped to skin and bone
Have now to deep umbrageous forests grown.
Old valleys, pinched by winter's poverty,
Roll smiling now in June fecundity;
Patches and lines, snow-brushed in monotone,
Have bloomed in flowery lanes and orchards sewn
On summer robes in rich embroidery.

The ocean narrows with no passing ships;

The desert is but a mirage of space
Compared with lands through which the plowshare
slips

And homes and harvests follow in its trace.
Heaven is a jail when stars are in eclipse,
There's no perspective in an empty face.

June 24.

ROAD MAKING

Where is the sonnet one would see on paper,
When two strong men knock on your door at morn,
And laughing all your arguments to scorn,
Compel you to come out with them and caper
All day behind a road plow and a scraper,
Until you wish that you had not been born!
And then when we our handiwork adorn,
And make a ribbon of it with a shaper,

To feel with them the pride in work creative,
And know not many neighbors can surpass us!
Well, this is not the literary mode;
But to have shared the epic of the native,
Although, forsooth, one has not climbed Parnassus,
He's helped, perhaps, to build to it a road.

June 26.

THE PASSING OF THE FLOWERS

How silent are the flowers in their going!
Long dreamed, they come and smile as if to stay;
Then quickly, oft unnoted, pass away.
March took her babies while it still was snowing;
And hand in hand with April in the glowing
Went others to the land of yesterday.
We scarcely missed them in the troops of May,
With apple blossoms all about us blowing,

And myriad leaves unfolding in a rush.
But now in June the year has come of age,
And as we nurse our hardwon annuals,
We sigh for bloom forgotten in the flush
Of eagerness to turn another page.
But early things are all perennials.

June 30.

JULY

3:30 A.M.

Never a blue so tender and replete
As that which tints the petals of the morn
Before the stronger hues of day are born.
When night, the shepherdess, gives up her seat
And leads her starry flocks in slow retreat,
While yet the bloom is dark upon the thorn,
The fields she leaves, all tenantless, forlorn,
Begin to blow with iris, rainy sweet

Above the northeast hills. No other spot
Is like it in the whole expanse of sky,
By night or day. No blue on land or sea
Like this first flower of virgin space, begot
Of light, when opening its tender eye
In all the innocence of infancy.

July 1.

FOG

Cold with old memories it drifts and blinds
The eyes of evening; and all the grace
Of nature vanishes, without a trace,
In this obsession of the deep, that finds
No rest or knowledge in the thing it binds.
Its tentacles go groping o'er my face—
Insistent fingers with no solid base.
It is, somehow, as if all drowning minds,

Drawn down into the whirling vortices,
Had mingled their last memories with the seas;
And every solemn and unlighted corse
Drifting for ever through its silent caves,
Stirred the huge twilight of the stumbling waves
To this uncharted nightmare of remorse.

July 2.

AROUND THE EDGES

Around the edges of my thoughts she peeps
Like a new moon emerging from a cloud.
On breezy heaths I hear her laugh aloud.
Deep from the heart of mystery she leaps;
And when along some pensive vale there creeps
A mist of melancholy like a shroud,
Slowly enveloping a world that's bowed
With agelong care, remediless; upsweeps

A youthful song; as though a hidden stream
Clove its triumphant way through mirk and dream
Into the sunshine and the azure sea.
It is her voice that sings the victory.
In nature she is present everywhere
And when I look into my heart she's there.
July 3.

OSPREY AT SUNSET

Proudly, on spreading pinions, it disdains
All motion save the bevelled plume that reams
The humming air; and, sweeping onward, screams
Down the dark valley; till it outward planes
Above the tidal current where it wanes.
Poising ensanguined in the sunset beams,
It folds its wings, and like a meteor streams
Headlong into the flood, and there remains

Submerged. The moments pass... then with a surge
The struggling forms of bird and fish arise,
Lashing the foam; sink; and once more emerge.
This time, with talons bedded in the prize,
The powerful wings the smothering waters purge
And homeward bear it with exulting cries.
July 7.

MOONSET

After the heat, the night became obscure;
And the young moon, in her first quarter, sank
Into a fume of vinous vapors rank,
Where she soon lost her beauty chaste and pure;
Blushing at first in her discomfiture
And trembling in her limbs as if she shrank
From the too heady potion that she drank.
All day behind her lusty paramour

Unnoted she had journeyed, and, one hour,
Had bloomed, ere sundown, as a perfect flower.
Soon bloated and disfigured beyond name,
She lived but as a dull and smoky flame
Behind a curtain. Now a dying spark.
And long before her time it will be dark.
July 8.

FIVE A.M.

The world this early morning is quite small:
That old crow sitting on the gnarled pine tree
Is silhouetted on its boundary.
Beyond is fog, banked in a solid wall.
It is the end—and, yet, the old crow's call
Is answered from beyond that barrier sea.
Answered—not echoed—unmistakeably
By other voices—apogogical.

A hermit thrush is singing far away—
And, lo, within the flood that sundereth,
Inverted trees and landscapes lightly play,
Fleeting and fragile as a summer breath—
He singeth on, of nest and coming day,
Beyond the mystery of life and death.
July 9.

THE EAGLES

Higher, still higher, on those mighty wings
Turning in proud affront to meet the gale,
In mastery; and on its fury sail
To heights unmeasured; with majestic swings
In widening circles, through the cloud that clings
About you, giddy vortices and hail
Beating remorseless on you like a flail.
Nothing can daunt you in your spirallings!

Below the landscape blanches in affright;
Flocks flee the tempest; forests in their might
Bow their proud heads in troubled unison;
Sailors in beaten ships to shelter run.
Above, on pinions motionless in light,
The conquering eagles rise to meet the sun.
July 10.

SHOWER AT SUNSET

All day the wind blew hotly from the south,
But died at evening in a darkening shower;
And in the downpour every drooping flower
Lifted to heaven its little eager mouth
Parched from the weary long-continued drouth.
Twas then in benediction of the hour
The setting sun looked from his mountain tower
And swept the circles of the azimuth,

Opening the calyx of the enfolding gloom
With the soft sorcery of living light,
'Till it became a trumpet flower in bloom
Above the earth, more palpable than night;
With golden stamens trembling in its womb
Wrought of the rain in pollenating flight.
July 11.

LESS

The whole was his had he but asked for less.
He loved, of course, with all a poet's fire;
Yearned with incomprehensible desire
To put the deity in a caress;
He bored me finally, I must confess.
I like being kissed, but never did aspire
To being the nine Muses or a choir
Of angels, when I do it more or less.

I know; the foolish fellow worshipped me,
But made me feel as if I were in church.
He played too deep a meaning in his role.
I want a love that slips on easily;
So took another; left him in the lurch.
He lost my body; did not save my soul.
July 14.

I MUST BE GOING

The poppy heads are dropping off to sleep.
The tidal bells are ringing far at sea;
One calling to the other—calling me.
Headland to headland speaks along the deep
And at their word the flashing beacons leap.
I must be going to bear them company—
To share the moving hours' immensity;
And in the pageant of the nightwatch keep
Unchallenged these far marches of the soul.
Perchance upon the borders we shall meet;
Patrol together with unfaltering feet;
Together hear the solemn sea bells toll;
Together watch the lonely stars arise;
Ours the dim oceans and the midnight skies.
July 15.

DAWN

Why, this is not the dawn! I felt it rise
Full hours ago in you. There is somewhere
A secret gate into a garden fair.
I cannot tell just on what slope it lies.
'Tis in a fairy world, where touch has eyes
And those who grope stir essences most rare;
Evoke enchantment in a dewy air;
Music in motion as a bird that flies

Through unencumbered night from star to star.
Do you remember, dear? 'Twas on the stroke
Of some tremendous moment you awoke
And came to me swift-rushing from afar,
Trailing a glory like the morning dove!
'Twas then the dawn came in the garden, love.
July 18.

THE SPRING

Someone must live beside this little spring,
Bubbling so purely in its gravelly bed;
With drooping ferns and mosses overhead.
It cannot be alone—this pretty thing!
Of all the charms of which men love to sing,
And all the spots to which their feet are led,
Surely this one must be inhabited!
There is some kindred spirit neighboring.

When Greece was young, a Naiad would here dwell;
When Puck held sway, a fairy in her cell.
I think it is some little Indian maid,
Still lingering in the patriarchal shade.
Or else some city child, who never had,
A spring like this in life to make her glad.
July 20.

THE SPOTTED LAWN

I love a little spotted lawn shut in
From the wild road; in spring white violets
Seed it with pearls; in turn each flower sets
Her sweet approval there; far from the din
Of all the noisy world we sit and spin
And to the drowsy wheel sing sweet duets,
This little lawn and I—with no regrets
For any prizes that we may not win.

Our choicest gifts come unsolicited,—
The whole expanse of heaven overhead;
The birds who stay and sing with us all day.
At dusk the little rabbits come and play.
We go to bed soon after candlelight
And quiet trees watch round us all the night.
July 22.

THE TREE

When things go wrong between the world and me,
I tell it to the wisest thing I know—
A tree. My fellow mortals come and go;
Changing their minds; chattering incessantly.
It is not so with my old friend the tree.
Abiding in one place, content and slow;
Patient with all the fickle winds that blow;
It has learned wisdom in stability.

So when I lean my head against its trunk,
And through its ancient branches see the sky—
Those knotted arms, scored by the heat and frost,
Of bare endurance knowing full the cost—
Deep in its grand old heart I hear a sigh
And a voice whispers, "Brother, do not flunk!"
July 23.

FLOWERS IN CHURCH

Plucked from the garden's careless company,
Where every roving wind and insect calls,
And birds the livelong day sing madrigals;
They have put by those days of jollity,
And come to church, demure and orderly.
Now cloistered nuns, within their chancel stalls,
A filtered sunlight on them gently falls;
And the sweet odor of their sanctity,

Like incense rises round the reredos,
Offering its homage to the holy cross.
This tribute of their beauty seems to be
The surest pledge of immortality.
And yet—when vespers whisper out the day—
Their lovely petals slowly fade away.
July 24.

THE BROOK

I could trot with this jolly brook all day,
He's such a nice good-natured sort of chap;
Smiling when he falls into a mishap
And getting up and going on his way,
With always interesting things to say.
And such adventures! Doesn't care a rap
For the dark forest or the deadly trap
And lurking Indians! Thinks it all is play!

He says he travels all the time and knows
Where the big trout are and the sweet flag grows;
And often sees the moose come down to browse
The lily pads around the musk rat's house!
He never goes to school or reads a book.
Gee whiz! How I should like to be a brook!
July 25.

COMPLEMENTS

Nature is mirrored in humanity.

To comprehend the wonder of the skies

One must have seen them in another's eyes.

Nature in us finds her epitome;

We to ourselves in nature find the key.

A certain infinite within us lies,

But blind until the outer heaven replies.

The two exist in relativity.

Each flows to each, seeking the other pole;

Each but a part of some still greater whole.

This is the mystery of the bread and wine,

The bridge between the human and divine.

The Incarnation is a Eucharist;

Christ reveals God; and God explains the Christ.

July 26.

SHIRLEY POPPIES

She wears loose, lovely, shimmering, silken things.

I've seen a bed of Shirley poppies, white,

Pale rose, and gold, in innocent delight,

Their fluted raiment fluttering like wings

Rising and falling to an air that flings

Their invitation to the bees in flight,

To pause and couch with them one dewy night.

So, like a poppy bed, there floats and clings

About her now a cloud of soft desire,

A bloom of spring beside a winter fire.

And in its tender, warm, narcotic blaze

Her silks thin into iridescent haze;

Her slippers, tufted stamens, lighting up

The lucent splendors of a poppy cup.

July 27.

HER LAW

Beauty is her unwritten law; her sky.

The words she pens are only hieroglyphs.

Now, as I read them, o'er me steal the whiffs
Of fields of clover, like a lullaby.

And following a painted butterfly

Across the page...there rise enchanted cliffs,

New peaks in Darien, new Teneriffes..

Zones of the spirit to the adventuring eye.

And these are but the outposts flung afar;

Within her soul the greater glories are.

Beauty that, to the outward, beauty lent;

Source of the Symbol and the Sacrament;

And when at last I lift the final veil

There I shall find what men have called the Grail.

July 28.

THE RAVEN

Now when the towering forest crests are graven

Darkly against the sunset dimly smoking,

Shadow with sunken shadow seaward yoking,

Mountain to mountain, haven unto haven,

Down the long gulf of cliffs goeth the raven;

Shade in the shades antiphonally croaking,

Echo by echo the reply evoking,

Seaward at sunset scorning the land craven;

Yielding to the abysses no surrender;

Forging alone its pathway sacerdotal

Out where the islands lie cradled in splendor—

Spray of wild roses blown on seas of opal—

Vision of time and space austere and tender,

Through this dark oracle somehow made vocal.

July 31.

AUGUST

SWALLOWS IN AUGUST

Now is the swarming of swallows;
Haunting the barns and the bridges;
Clustering like flies on the ridges;
Gleaning the cornfields and fallows;
Over the hilltops and hollows
Soaring in convolute fidges
After invisible midges,
Daring the bold eye that follows!

Beaded like notes on the wires,
Biding the time of their going;
Restless and murmuring choirs,
Soon to be rising and flowing,
Off to the lands of desires,
Wise in a wisdom past knowing.
August 1.

TO CHURCH

Out of a snarl of roads, crooked and blind,
We came at last upon the open sea,
Smiling and bland in its immensity;
And with it came a peace such as we find
In the companionship of a great mind.
No human seizure held its realms in fee,
The yielding sky alone its boundary.
Below, the bells of many faiths enshrined

In a small town upon the marge were clanging,
And soon the other small town folk and I
Upon the weekly sermon would be hanging—
The parson's postscript to the sea and sky,
After the roads as rutted and as blind
As the poor habits of the human mind.
August 5.

HUMMING BIRD

Past eight o'clock, with bees still murmuring
Around the larkspur in the twilight grey
Assiduously, as they have done all day;
Now as about the spires they probe and cling
A hummingbird slides in on droning wing
And seats himself upon a nodding spray—
An aviator, born but yesterday.
A bumblebee goes by him blundering,

Rousing his ire; then an enquiring eye
Follows some finches whimpering through the sky.
- Rested; he poises on the cushioned air
And with the bees partakes the honeyed fare;
Then, rising, swerves in rectilinear flight
And vanishes into the gathering night.
August 6.

LARKSPUR

All summer nature patiently pursues
The task of forging in her sultry fires
The living steel of these delphinium spires.
The light of armor flickers in the hues
Of purple, grey and iridescent blues.
Methinks the walks are thronged with knights and
squires
Armed cap-a-pie, amid the rich attires
Of their fair ladies and their retinues;
Until, forsooth, the humble garden plot
Seems like King Arthur's town of Camelot.
And, when the moonlight falls on helm and spur,
Once more the mystic sword Excalibur
Is lifted high above a host in mail,
Kneeling before the vision of the Grail.
August 10.

THE MYOSOTIS SEA

The evening sea was mysosotis blue;
Never a floor that was so richly paved,
Or human temple so divinely naved,
As these tall cliffs lichened in every hue,
That to their brows the vaulted heavens drew,
With white sea gulls and samphire architraved;
And had their dark and glistening bases laved,
As in a mirror, by the flowers that grew

In Paradise. A blue through which a fire,
Breathing a rosy brightness, went and came,
Like the fine rapture of a soul's desire,
Burning with inextinguishable flame,
In which the hosts of holy ones aspire
Unto the mystery that has no naame.
August 12.

THE CHANNEL LIGHT

Far off, somewhere, upon the mountain gaunt,
Lost in the gathering gloom, an eagle screams,
Then bursts into wild laughter. Sooth, it seems
As if some spirit had returned to haunt
Its former place and from the twilight flaunt
Its misery, in the disordered gleams
Of memory moving in unhappy dreams;
Finding relief, perchance, in cries that daunt

The living when the darkness falls apace.
Seaward the windows in the sunset blaze;
And further still, in its appointed place,
Faithful through all the changing nights and days
Above the channels where the last tides race,
A beacon light sends forth its steady rays.
August 14.

THE CLAM FLATS

Mile after mile of iridescent flats,
For ever swept between the great extremes;
Sea-buried, now, with water-filtered gleams;
Now, baring to the sky their purple mats,
Teeming with treasure steeped in oozy vats;
Through which, in graven channels, wander streams,
As instincts through the nakedness of dreams,
Tenacious of their ancient habitats.

Daily into the basin foams the tide,
Obliterating all its muddy bars;
Lifting the little rivers till they ride
Triumphantly beneath the sun and stars:
Then rapidly the whelming floods subside
And leave them raw, with all their ancient scars.
August 16.

THE HAYMAKERS

Rimmed by the granite hills, firclad, austere,
Through miles of meadows, in a shining sliver,
Runs the dark current of a northern river;
Under an August sky so sharp and clear
The near is naked, and the far seems near.
No heat intemperate makes these aspens shiver,
And in no wind these flowering grasses quiver,
But from a light pitilessly severe,

That gives their bents the glint of bayonets
Marching through fields of emeralds harsh and crude,
Deeper than shadow; where the water frets
In silver through a landscape sober-hued;
And men and horses, antlike silhouettes,
Labor amid a sundark solitude.
August 20.

MONITIONS

The early mornings wet with dew and chill;
A little dullness often in the day;
A warning sense of something on the way
Upon a world from which the vital thrill
Of youth has gone and beauty has grown still,
Touched here and there with symptoms of decay;
And life, somehow, has lost its gift of play,
And heeds some other call for good or ill.

These are the signs inscribed upon the wheel
Of ceaseless change, while still the rose is red,
And buxom summer makes her old appeal
Among the fields as yet unharvested.
But migrant bird and ripening seed conceal
The fire that flies before the word is said.
August 21.

ASCENSION

New forests tower along the roads; it seems
As if, some tranquil summer eve, a god,
In all the splendors of the sunset shod,
Had passed this way into the land of dreams,
And left his imprint in these fiery streams
Of epilobium, aster, goldenrod,
And eupatorium, springing from the sod
In corymbs, umbels, panicles, racemes
Of purple, white, magenta, rose, and gold.
Erelong, these wayside glories will arise
Hillward, in silent graduals, to unfold
Their final testament before our eyes
And pass from these last Olivets to hold
Their solemn promise in the winter skies.
August 24.

BEHIND THE DRIFTING CLOUD

Behind the drifting cloud a pallid face
Peers steadfastly into the farthest deep,
With eyes that years have never closed in sleep;
As if by nightly watching they would trace
The pathless way to some far heavenly place,
Where never weary souls are known to weep,
And every harvest sown the sowers reap.
Nor ever can the cloud that watch efface.

Far to the south the light breaks suddenly
And shines upon a molten silver sea,
Where through the mists enchanted islands rise
And float with silken sails through summer skies.
But still the pallid watcher heavenward turns
And to that place unknown for ever yearns.
August 25.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

From lamp and ruddy glow into the night
I step. The darkness is profound. A haze
Thick as a cloak envelops all the ways
To eye and foot familiar grown. No light,
From where the horizon was, to zenith height
Gives friendly aid. I grope as in a maze
With hands outstretched. Now, suddenly a blaze
From the unwonted north streams wildly bright

As if behind the solemn hills somewhere
A city of ice were burning and the flare
Of its vast conflagrations filled the sky
With rolling billows of a pale green fire;
And meteoric splendors streaming high
When some great palace totters on its pyre.
August 26.

BIRCHES IN A THUNDERSHOWER

The storm swept suddenly to the attack
Across the hill and fell upon the trees,
With mighty shouting. On the sombre frieze
I saw the birches reeling in its track;
And then, recovering, with heads thrown back,
And garments streaming from their breasts and
knees,
Maintain their ground, like wingèd Victories,
Triumphantly, amid the flying wrack.

The tempest passed as quickly as it came;
And when the sun shone out once more, the hems
Of all their robes were broidered round with gems,
Dropped from the whirlwind of the cloud and flame;
And on their foreheads sparkling diadems,
In knightly homage to their virgin fame.
August 27.

SUNSET OF FLOWERS

For ever she reserveth some surprise!
Last night, as wild a storm as ever blew;
This evening, when I go forth anew
To watch red Mars, now nearing us, arise,
I look, instead, into a dreamer's eyes.
Ashes of rose, green gold of feverfew,
With all the daisy fields that ever grew,
Are lightly brushed into these western skies,
And gaze at me, heaven-deep, beneath a brow,
Wreathed with a garland of veronica,
In which there gleam the jewels of the Plow.
The soul of flowers—a prolegomena
Of spirit more important to me now
That all the Martian ephemera.
August 28.

ASTERS

On Gospel and Epistle side, a row
Of lovely, curly, drowsy, cherub heads,
In all the shades of white and mauves and reds—
These are not strictly human hues I know,
But then, in other worlds it may be so—
Sit in the chancel of the garden beds,
Nodding beneath the "Dearly beloveds,
Thus saiths, and therefore, wherefores," con and pro

And usual paraphernalia
Of a sonorous pulpit dahlia,
Magnificent in his regalia;
Who, scorning all weak palliatives and plasters,
Portrays the hyperborean disasters
That soon will overtake these drowsy asters.
August 30.

FIRESIDE

Now when the daylight shows a flying hoof
Across the wilderness of hills and bogs
And early evening brings the drifting fogs,
With trailing rain upon the shingle roof,
How good from all the world to draw aloof
And heap once more the ancient fire dogs,
With a full arm of seasoned hardwood logs,
And put the summer's harvest to the proof,

With pen and pad before the purring fire;
Or while the darkness blots the outer space,
Soothed by the flames, the paths of memory trace;
Until, perchance, moved by an old desire,
One takes a silent singer from his place
Among the books, and bids him strike his lyre.
August 31.

SEPTEMBER

REMOTENESS

Far off upon the summit of a hill,
Seated upon the pastures like a crown
Of quiet pearl, I saw a little town
Enameled on the heavenly blue. At will,
When thought turns inward, I can see it still.
Never for me will storms above it frown;
Never from that far height will it come down
To mingle in the strife of good and ill.

I never shall go there on pilgrimage
Or of its history seek to turn a page;
But ever keep it on the untroubled marge,
Where life, at last, is luminous and large—
Untravelled hills, for ever set apart,
The beautiful horizons of the heart.
Sept. 1.

PRUNING

When the sunset southward slips
And the garden grows jejune,
Though fond memories importune,
And the wild bee comes and sips
Nectar from the lingering lips
As of old,—'Tis time to prune.
Naught that's dear should be immune
From the searching censorships.

Even though it be in Arden
And the shearing costs us dear;
Everyone his heart should harden,
If he would see, bright and clear,
Beauty reigning in his garden,
In the autumn of the year.
Sept. 2.

THE FIRE OF SMALL STICKS

I build my evening fire of small round sticks,
With a sound backlog—half a dozen or so
Set on the andirons in a level row—
The thinnings and the windfalls—all I mix.
The lumberman would call them derelicts,
Especially the alder—that I know.
But they *do* burn with a consuming glow
And new and wonderful pyrotechnics.

That cherry log looks like a small black whale,
Sailing in seas of fire with smoking tail;
And that green fir, that like an angel sang,
Has just blown up, with a terrific bang;
And in the carpet burnt a fiery hole—
Just like a young and unrepentant soul.
Sept. 3.

VIATICUM

Southward at eve, in calm September weather,
Over the clean rim of the chalice pearled
And brimmed with wine dark with the tints of heather,
Uprose the margin of another world;
Out of the ocean, gold on every feather,
Pinions of cloud, with remiges unfurled;
Coverts of silver lightly locked together
With barbicels of fire softly curled.

The glory of the sun had passed away
And shadows of the night already come,
When from this holy housel streamed a ray
To touch the earthly lips already dumb,
And light the features of the dying day
With the sweet glow of the viaticum.
Sept. 4.

SEPTEMBER BLUE

Now with the falling of the latter rain
And cooling temperature, there comes the true
Limpid and iris-eyed September blue.
The skies all cleansed from every summer stain
And freshly polished to the lucid grain
Appear as if they had been born anew
Of spring anemones and morning dew.
The quiet nacre of old porcelain,

With its long vistas of maturing ways;
And the swift tender noonday milkiness
Of the parturient solstitial days,
Are all dissolved in sapphire fathomless
In its clear earth-emancipated blaze
Of spirit radiant in holiness.

Sept. 5.

AFTER A MOODY MORN

After a moody morn it laughs aloud
And joy and sadness alternately chase
In sun and shadow o'er its rugged face;
Above the shaggy mountain, granite browed,
The silvery radiance of the shattered cloud
Is as a crown of laurel set to grace
The genius of an elder Titan race.
For all this changing landscape is endowed;

Beyond its stony aspects harsh and rude,
A tender meaning breathes within the scroll;
And this eventful beauty plays a role
Of more importance than similtude;
And I, the atom, answering to the whole,
Feel at its heart a kindred certitude.

Sept. 6.

THEY COME AND GO

They come and go and place on us their mark.
As, while we sleep, the outer sea explores,
With delicate unwearying hands, the shores,
Leaving strange treasures in the kindly dark,
Within a stone's throw of the nesting lark,
That, with the morning, shakes his wings and soars
Into the sun, above the misty floors.
There, lost from sight in the effulgent arc

Of heaven, he pours his hidden ecstasy
In floods of daydream music that prolong,
Into the waking hours the harmony
Of all the tides that come and go and throng
The gulfs of being with their mystery,
Leaving their gifts for us in dream and song.
Sept. 7.

THE APPLE

They tell me that to sit apart and watch
The movement of this spectacle sublime
And seek its secret it a waste of time.
Simpler by far to go and cut a notch
In an old tree for record, than to botch
A vain reflection in a daub of rhyme.
No fowler may the bird of beauty lime;
Or subtlety of any thinker scotch

The wily serpent hid among the leaves,
That has beguiled in turn so many Eves.
Better with lambs to caper on the grass;
To feel the bubble effervesce, and pass
The challenge of the color on the fruit
Fools eat, wise shun, and geniuses impute.
Sept. 8.

OLD SUMMER

Standing between the flower and the flame,
Against a cloud tint like a blackberry,
Old summer showed me her embroidery,
Last of her handiwork upon the frame
Before she yielded to the frost her claim,—
Sunshine mellowed in wood to old sherry
Kissed the red rowan lips and wild cherry;
And dreamed among the leaves till they became

A memory becalmed in jade, afloat
Above a dark and moving tide, that kept
A deeper memory of things remote;
And spoke in muted music when it swept
In silver ripples round an anchored boat,
That 'twixt the image and the shadow slept.
Sept. 9.

MOUNTAIN HAYFIELD

A solitary field, it lies asleep,
Nodding with autumn dandelions spun
Out of its daydreams in the golden sun.
Another year men will return to reap;
Till then it is alone, with hills to keep
It company. The harvesting is done;
And its still, sweet siesta has begun.
Over it now the lengthening shadows sweep

Like hands upon the dial of a clock,
Marking the passing hours from rock to rock—
A moving silence in a solitude
Unbroken, save perchance, when evening lays
Her gentle twilight on its quietude,
A timid deer will venture forth to graze.
Sept. 11.

GIPSY

Adown the mountain she comes dancing,
With castanets and silver bangles,
Whirling around the rocky angles;
Along the open highway prancing,
By swinging grass and shallows glancing.
The rowan red above her dangles,
When through the wood, all spots and spangles,
The little gipsy goes romancing :

Singing carefree her wildest notes
And sailing fleets of bubble boats
In dappled shade and drowsy gleams ;
While in a sea of golden motes
Above her head, September floats
Another fleet of leafy dreams.
Sept. 12.

SOMETHING NOW TELLS ME

Something now tells me that I must be going,
Some atavistic fever in the blood,
That sweeps me from my moorings with the flood
Of feathered travellers now southward flowing,
And clouds of downy capsules bravely blowing
Far from their stalks on all the winds that scud.
I would not be an ox to chew the cud
All winter in a stable when it's snowing ;

Or brother to the snug, contented dweller
Who fattens on the contents of his cellar.
I am aware life must have roots and nests,
But later it has other interests.
When food no longer is its sole indenture,
It will be ready for the great adventure.
Sept. 15.

FIRST FROST

Some moonlight night, when all is clear and still;
After a day, perchance, serene and dry,
Without a cloud in the September sky;
Or, when the restless wind has worked its will
And fallen asleep behind the northern hill;
A strange and breathless beauty will draw nigh,
Beyond the reach of death, to sanctify
The peaceful end of summer, with the thrill

Of a new venture and a solemn call.
The tender flowers will be the first of all
The secret of the mystery to seek;
Leaving the bloom upon the placid cheek:
And gentle sunshine in the morn will fall
Upon these mute memorials of the meek.
Sept. 16.

RED SUNSET

To-night, as in a theatre, there hung,
Back of a stage wide as a continent,
A seamless curtain of fine fibre blent.
Sheer from the very roof of heaven it swung,
And north and south its endless texture flung.
Through it a flaming conflagration went,
Burning continually, and still unspent;
Threatening the cosmos with its fiery tongue.

Before it hills and mountains, rank on rank,
Blackened and shriveled, and to molehills sank;
While at their feet the ocean's moving flood
Turned first to molten metal, then to blood;
O'er which the silent folk, with laboring oar,
Like shades in Hades, passed from shore to shore.
Sept. 17.

O SOUTH WIND!

O South Wind, why are you so furious,
Storming up through our gateways in a gale,
Arming our landlocked sea in silver mail?
You were the summer sign luxurious:
But now your promise may be spurious;
For, if, perchance, at evening you should fail,
Tomorrow morn may tell another tale.
Of our sweet store we grow usurious

Counting the time before the certain end
And blossoms flee before the biting cold.
I pray you, Notus, as an ancient friend,
Be not so swift your arbitrage to spend,
Blow softly and your genial quarter hold,
And so prolong the gentle age of gold.
Sept. 18.

MOONLIGHT

A sea of silver and a land of dreams.
With noiseless step I walk in silence deep
Through the enchanted realms of glimmering sleep,
Hearing the murmuring of hidden streams.
Through alleys dim I catch the sinuous gleams
Of rhythmic fountains in their languid leap,
And slumbering cataracts against their steep
Far summits. All this land is clothed in beams

Of azure light that have their origin
In some rayed sun, reflected now in me;
And breaking through the mystery within,
To join the old moon travelling o'er the sea,
Matter and mind creatively begin
The miracle of fresh reality.
Sept. 19.

DESERTED

Lulled by the soft September life of ease,
Some day our confidence is rudely shaken,
And from the pleasant lethargy we waken
To find, by imperceptible degrees,
The flowers no more are haunted by the bees;
The summer birds their playgrounds have forsaken,
And, one by one, unmarked, departure taken.
Silence now reigns amid the sleepy trees;

And we are left, free from the nursery strife,
To mark the advent of another life,
Simple, more leisurely, and more austere,
But with the thinning vistas, growing clear;
First with a downward, then an upward slope,
Firm on the granite of eternal hope.
Sept. 20.

HOMESPUN DAYS

What make you, then, of all the homespun days,
When nature plays no more a noble role?
How find, in monotone, the oversoul,
While life plods on in humble rustic ways?
Or where the theme on which to sound the praise
Of skies chased like a tarnished silver bowl,
O'er which in whirling flocks, as black as coal,
The crows are etched amid the rainy haze?

These sober scenes, of which we make complaint,
Are they to be dissevered by the knife!
Or worn as hair shirts by the patient saint
To win him heavenward through continual strife!
Do they yield beauty only when in paint,
Or are they, too, the greater art of life!
Sept. 21

ARCTOTIS GRANDIS

I met her at a gorgeous autumn show;
Standing apart, behind a leafy screen,
In aureoles of violet with a sheen
More lustrous than the crystals of the snow—
Deep at the centre, with a golden glow.
All winged and clothed was she in living green,
Ready for flight. I knew her as a queen
In that far country where I sometimes go—

Beyond the spectrum— where the overtones
Of life and thought enter another state;
And beings such as she, upon their thrones,
Claim our allegiance and articulate
Our earthly recognitions into zones
Of spirit splendor that they formulate.
Sept. 22.

CIVILIZATION

A cool September evening, pitchblack;
With freshly fragrant, faintly moving air,
And crickets chirping in the dark somewhere,
Along a country road winding far back,
Through woods and fields, beyond the beaten track.
After a plodding mile, a mellow glare
Slanting across the roadway, and I stare
Through a wide-open door, beyond a stack

Of firewood, at a mother bending o'er
A baby in her arms; while, book in hand,
She hears the lessons of the older four,
Circled around her; and I understand,
How it may be, despite things we deplore,
Civilization wins and holds the land.
Sept. 23.

ANTIRRHINUM

I know a favored northern isle that lifts
An autumn garden, where the last bees drone,
Above the waves' eternal monotone.
Along its paths the antirrhinum drifts
In dim facades and cloud-imprisoned rifts
Of sleeping marbles, where the spray has blown
Its prised rainbows into sculptured stone.
Then, when the subtle sunlight o'er it sifts

It seems as if some city by the sea,
Escaped from Time, the dragon, that devours
Man's handiwork and all he holds in fee,
Lived on for ever, with her walls and towers
Sealed by her sons in gates of ivory,
That open yearly in a dream of flowers.
Sept 25.

THE CORDIAL

All day September from a brimming cask
Has poured for us libations of a wine
In which the ardent wooings of the vine,
Through summer days, in amber memories bask;
And we have gone about the daily task
Contented with a beverage so divine.
But, now, at eve, her skilful fingers twine
The scarlet maples round a mountain flask,
Distilled from all the ferments of the years.
Through its old gold the greens of springtide creep
To warm the depths of unremembered tears;
And from its shadows, stars like bubbles leap,
To rob the night of its unfounded fears.
So giveth she the cordial of sleep.
Sept 26.

I AM NOT LOST

I am not lost; I live by open doors.
Daily, from fold to pasture measureless,
In crowded ranks, led by the shepherdess,
Before my eyes, the flock of Fundy pours.
The swollen cataract behind me roars
The news of the Canadian wilderness.
I am content. I need no daily press
To tell me that above me heaven soars.

Cut off from human fellowship! O, no.
Many a kindred spirit hither wends.
Some on their silent missions come and go,
Who leave no footprints on the dew or snow.
But at the summit where the long trail ends
There'll be my hills, my rivers, and my friends.
Sept. 27.

ROUTINE

He fell in love with love, unsight unseen,
But found in course of time he loved it not;
That life was easier without a plot;
Though even this discovery, I mean,
Was not discovered but slipped in between,
As other things slipped out and were forgot;
Until at last he slid into his lot
And settled down in love with his routine.

Dear morning toilet, ritual of the bath!
Coffee and eggs and business of the day!
Mild self indulgence, with its aftermath—
Arterial sclerosis, golf, and play.
These primroses bloomed all along his path.
And life in perfect order slid away.
Sept. 30.

OCTOBER

THE MAPLE

Out of the clinging mist a maple flared.

No adamantine cliff above the sea

Ever was hued with such solidity ;

Or quarry, thunder-riven, ever bared

Such stones ; or human architecture dared

A building of such virtuosity.

Yet one, beholding, dreamed that there may be

Cities like autumn somewhere, many staired,

Towering against the sky in high relief,

Founded and fashioned out of massive light :

Landscapes that lie behind the barrier reef,

Where breaks the foam we know as mortal sight,

Wrought of a substance finer than the leaf

And more enduring than the chrysolite.

Oct. 1.

CALAIS, MAINE

Infinite ramp of blue, stainless, serene,

Younger than youth and never to grow old ;

Washed now along its bases with fine gold

Laid as a lustre on the summer green,

Where the clear hills take on the autumn sheen.

A priestly river flowing, silver-stoled,

Between the spires of churches white and cold,

From the unseen into the still unseen.

The changing seasons on its movement borne

Are as a seamless robe, commensurate

Through immemorial ages to adorn

Its ageless beauty ; while the sleepers wait

Within the silent city for the morn

To smite its javelin on the eastern gate.

Oct. 4.

A QUIET LANE

A quiet lane and pair of pasture bars ;
Cows from the twilight trooping at your call ;
With sumach reddening along the wall ;
And milking time beneath the friendly stars,
Breathing an air first touched with frost that scars
The whispering corn. These are the things that fall
Like manna on the soul when passions pall
And men are weary of the strife that mars

Life's finest lines. Not all the lust for power,
Or money, which is such an evil thing ;
Nor love so often only bitter pain ;
Can wean our memories from such an hour,
When we drove home the cows at evening
And life led on, as simple as a lane.

Oct. 10.

THE FIELD

I have known spring, full summer, and harvest—
The ritual procession of the year.
Now, with the reaping done, when leaves are sere,
The autumn moon is shining in the west.
I have fulfilled the cycle of the quest ;
Love and fruition have come to me here
And memory will sit with me for cheer,
When winter comes. Full is the granary chest.
“Put in the plow ; and let the share go deep.
“Spare not ; but turn the furrow to the sun ;
“And sow—grief—hope—aye, if you will, sow
pain.
“You will sow youth in all ; you cannot keep
“Youth from the seed. The cycle has begun.
“Ere winter comes ; this must be green again.”

Oct. 12.

DEATH OF THE MATERIALIST

Into the night, the palpable unknown,
Sight become darkness; darkness, second sight;
The invisible made visible—as night.
The last inheritance now on the throne;
Obliterating all to reign alone;
Stagnant with embryos on which the light
Shall never dawn; while memory takes flight
Before this horror coming to its own—

This parasite of life! that draws its breath
From me; living alone because I live;
Dying with me! A last terrific hour
Of gradual extinction; and the power
Of life compelling fresh experience to give
Birth at the grave! God, for quick noon in death.
Oct. 28.

THE TIDES

The tides pour into us and we are filled.
There comes the brimming moment—and the pause,
Then, in obedience to its occult laws,
The summit reached—the onward rush is stilled;
And, though the surface ripples yet be thrilled
With forward urge, the mighty flood withdraws
From off our shores. Beyond us lies the cause.
However greatly the reclaim be willed,

The moving spirit works its own decrees,
In stars and men, the seasons and the seas.
The channel waits until the waters flow,
As gardens wait till vernal breezes blow.
Without, within, the tides of God patrol,
Marked by the silent watcher called the Soul.
Oct. 29.

THE LAST EPIC

From Being's unconcealed affirmatives,
In its Becomings endlessly displayed;
And those unsummed impressions on us made;
The child reacts by interrogatives,
Alike with every groping thing that lives,
Through those instinctive reflexes that aid
The law of life—that law must be obeyed.
Later unfold the rich derivatives,

Where bare potentials in the mass immerse
Slowly arise to knowledge of the whole.
The inarticulate becomes the terse—
The song that sings its way towards the goal.
And the first epic of the universe
Becomes the final epic of the soul.
Oct. 30.

THE OLD DOORYARD

None now recall the house or where they sleep.
Over the open pasture cattle stray,
And from the forest border, night and day,
The skirmish lines go straggling up the steep,
And beds of juniper and blueberries creep
Upon the fort, with rabble of wild hay.
But the old dooryard keeps them all at bay.
Its short sweet turf, grazed by untended sheep,

From vagrant weed and interloper free,
Unfenced, unarmed, maintains the ancient bound,
Enclosing now naught but a memory;
And throws its own green mantle o'er the mound
Of mouldering wall, in meek fidelity,
To what was home, and still is holy ground.
Eve of All Hallows, Oct. 31.

EARLY

OVER THE HILLS

Over the hills I go on my journie,
By dawn and eve seeking my lady fair;
Her with the sea-deep eyes and perilous hair?
Long have I fared through many a far countrie,
But never yet did I her sweet face see.
Pray, shepherds, have you seen my lady fair,
Her with the sea-dark eyes and perilous hair?
For I must see her, or I die speedie!

“O, sir, her perilous hair we did espy
Blown with the dawn along the morning sky;
And were not those her eyes, we saw, sea-deep,
When gentle night was leading home the sheep?
Come share our oaten crust and shepherd be
And thou shalt see thy lady verily.”

LOVE'S GARDEN

I lay this garland at my lady's feet,
Plucked fresh to-day in Love's fair garden close;
Where four great ways the river of life flows,
With murmured ravishment of music sweet,
Through sunny lawn and shadowy retreat;
While on its bank in trembling radiance blows
The mirrored beauty of the mystic rose,
A tribute to my lady's charms most meet.

Her smile upon it is its daily sun;
Her grace the fulness of its stream supplies
And every plant within it nourishes.
Other than she for mistress has it none.
Through her alone my garden flourishes
And when she is withdrawn my garden dies.

THE PERPETUAL VISION

I think upon my lady day and night,
 Gazing at things with all unseeing stare,
 Because within the dark I see her hair;
And when the tender gloom grows softly bright
Her eyes, dim brooding vistas of delight
 Into the gardens of her soul most fair;
 Where burning roses rain upon the air,
And snowy doves wheel in their happy flight.

I stretch my hands and feel her finger tips;
 I touch the delicate folds of her dress
 And draw her close till we are face to face.
Then to the refuge of her trembling lips
 I home my love in passionate caress
 And rest content within that dear embrace.

HAUNTED

As waving boughs and sailing clouds play tricks
 Of light and shade in flickering witchery,
 Weaving and ravelling endless tapestry;
So in the soul where visions ever mix,
The sunlight through the wavering shadow pricks
 A golden web of glimmering fantasy;
 And on his wings of dusty marquetry
The brown moth through the velvet darkness flicks.

But ever in the maze I see a face;
 Now waving in the golden moted beam;
Now whirling where the heated eddies race;
 Or swimming in the lily-haunted stream;
 Or from the deepest dark appealingly,
 Like the dim vision of eternity.

GREEN GLASS

I sit and dream of thee, dear heart, of thee,
Strange lucent visions that continually pass
Behind some barrier of greenish glass.
As if another country there might be,
Wherein the water-wind blows steadily
Long stealthy shadows on the wavering grass
And the dim atmosphere no echo has,
Only the silent foot of memory.

I stretch my hands and touch the empty air ;
I pierce the darkness ; but you are not there.
And still the forms continually pass
Behind some barrier of greenish glass,
And gaze at me with melancholy eyes,
Filled with the wonder of a mute surprise.

A THOUSAND MILES

A thousand miles of sleeping hill and dale,
Folded in purple raiment softly bright,
Lie gently pillowed on the shoulder white
Of the moon mother, as she bends with pale
Madonna face, rimmed with the dusky veil
Of that young widowhood we call the night.
But in her eyes there yearns the deathless light
Of memory whose pledges cannot fail.

So far apart and, yet, how close are we
Within the everlasting arms, and borne
On silent pinion through the dark abyss,
To that bewildering, awakening kiss
And rapturous cry of those who greet the morn ;
The nuptials of their ancient destiny.

MY FAME

The pennons flutter blue and white and rose,
Like birds against the rising morning sky;
While flying fame from a white cloud on high
A strident note upon her trumpet blows
And all the stirring world a-marching goes
Its fortunes on the field to essay and I,
With all the rest, go forth my lance to try,
Because I think that my dear lady knows.

I weigh the laurel's worth; I scorn no part
Of duty to be done; and yet, dear heart,
Thou art the righteousness of every cause.
Thou art my fame and thou my destiny.
Dearer than triumph is thy smile to me;
Thy welcome more than all the world's applause.

DEFEAT

I started out in brave attire arrayed,
When morning lands lay bright with dew
empearled
And hope breathed lightly on the awakening
world;
My banner to the cheery breeze displayed;
Resolved to conquer by my trusty blade
And see my foes from their advantage hurled.
But I return at night with banner furled,—
Defeated, broken, weaponless, betrayed.

I come to thee, dear heart, and stand without.
I dare not cross the threshold of thy door.
No spoils have I at thy proud feet to pour;
No trophies wrested in victorious rout;
No followers my triumph to acclaim;
No honors save my own untarnished name.

WIND AND MOON

A smoking scud hurls through the darkened sky;
Tormented by the wind's relentless lash,
The hoary monarchs of the forest clash
Their antlers at the foe defiantly.
Up from the spouting deep with clamorous cry,
The serried ranks of hissing breakers dash
Upon the white-fanged ledges, with the crash
Of heavy guns and rattling musketry.

Twisted and tortured are all earth and ocean;
Mistily whirling in a wild commotion.
While far above them peers the yellow face
Of the old moon, journeying, with even pace,
Her ancient path through the untroubled deep,
Unmoved by all the storms that o'er us sweep.

TWIN-FLOWERS

Two birds are soaring in the mirrored deep,
Wing answering wing, with measured beat and
slow,
Wheeling their silent arcs above, below.
In still embrace two shadowy green banks sleep,
While o'er their fragile verge the twin-flowers peep
And to each other kisses softly blow.
Solemn white clouds pace slowly to and fro
And sphering skies a double vigil keep.

So art thou mirrored in a waiting heart.
Thy subtle grace and beauty all are mine.
As all that I possess has long been thine.
Thyself I keep; give back the counterpart.
Who now can separate the you and me,—
A mirrored life, orbéd in one destiny.

THE CHALLENGE

When I have come unto the place of death
And feel the groping sands beneath my feet,
And hear the river roaring down to meet
The unknown sea; then, with my parting breath,
As one who knoweth that he conquereth,
I'll cry thy name, the unknown powers to greet,
And rush upon the fords in their retreat,
Knowing that mighty love delivereth.

Ah, love, thou art my shield inviolate;
Thou art my one imperishable song;
Thou art my death and thou my one dread fate;
With thee I fight the battle of the strong;
Giving to other death his heaviest odds;
And boldly challenge the immortal gods.

SUNSET IN AUGUST

Slowly the day is fading to a close.
The crickets shrill their sharp autumnal cry.
On silent wing a migrant bird flits by
And in some blanching thicket seeks repose.
With no warm splendors now the sunset glows;
A copper light is in the western sky,
Through which the heavy clouds drift sullenly,
While from the unchanging north a drear wind
blows.

The shivering fields grope like the newly blind;
The woods are full of whispered menaces.
Upon a lonely hill an eagle screams
And stirs the darkening wastes with troubled
dreams.
Vainly the flowers look up for solaces.
The face of nature is no longer kind.

WHERE AUTUMN HILLS

Where autumn hills serenely sit and dream,
I saw the waters hurrying on and on
Unceasingly, and in their eyes there shone
A lovely light; not like the ensanguined gleam
Of gorging passion, or the pale moonbeam
Of eyes all worshipful, from which has gone
Desire for all that they have looked upon,
And heavenward yearn, — the present to redeem.

But these were glowing with the amethyst
Of genius purged from every base desire;
A chiming sea of glass minged with fire;
Where burning thoughts in heavenly splendors
throng,
And vision with perpetual beauty kist,
In restless rapture flows to ceaseless song.

BLUEBIRD IN AUTUMN

The elm's high arches now are thin and sere.
Gone is the cool and shadowy retreat
Above the noisy bustle of the street;
But, as with saddened eyes I upward peer,
Somewhere among the roofless boughs I hear
A gentle bluebird warbling low and sweet,
As when so long ago he sang to greet
His mate at the returning of the year.

Now is there wrought a sudden mystery.
The erstwhile sad and faded autumn skies
Smile on me laughingly with April eyes.
I hear the sap go singing to the bud,
And borne, breast high, upon the eddying flood,
I feel the rhythm of eternity.

DESOLATION

The northern deeps are blue and far with cold.
In one red streak the dying day expires,
And in the ashes of its funeral fires,
A solitary star gleams wan and old
Upon a summer where the tale is told.
Life, spent with passion in its past desires,
Upon itself in solitude retires,
To dream of all that has been bought and sold.

So on my heart the ashes now are cast;
The end of its brief summer comes at last;
Sunset and star are now my only light.
I tell in turn the beads of memory,
Watching the darkness rolling silently,
And, like my fathers, wait the approaching night.

THE END

The darkness waits without. It is the end.
At last the long expected goal I face,
To which we all set out with eager pace,
And gloriously the golden moments spend.
Then, later, falteringly, our footsteps fend,
As if we would our foolish way retrace
Through a world gradually grown commonplace.
Farewell, ye woods and fields that ever bend,

As though ye could the final secret catch
That halts with finger on the trembling latch!
'Tis vain. That much I've learned. And now I fare
Alone, somewhere! God only knows! Somewhere.
The old illusions faded from the sky.
I am a little weary. So — Good-bye!

AUGUSTINE H. AMORY

Sweet as the sunrise on the silent hills,
Kissing the shadows into outlines fair,
His spirit dawned upon our earthly care.
Gentle as showers the April cloud distills,
Waking to music all the sleeping rills
And clothing with fresh green the pastures bare,
So rained his happy influence everywhere;
Flushing with new-born hopes poor dying wills.

Some to themselves prove God by argument;
Others in nature find his living law;
But he in Christ the heavenly presence saw,
And in his footsteps trod with glad content;
His whole life fashioning upon that plan,—
God's humble, patient, kindly gentleman.

L'ENVOI

DANTE AND BEATRICE

Beside the river, like a silver shield,
With steady hand upon the parapet,
He looked into her face. When their eyes met,
Love opened the great wound that never healed;
Through which, in after days, would be revealed
The heavens and hells, in their wide circles, set
Around the woman love could not forget,
But ever reverence; as both must yield

To God. All lovers now unto them yearn—
The way of the New Life — how it befell,
The body lost, they found their Paradise;
And all who would their footsteps thither turn,
Whether it be to a new heaven or hell,
Must find the gateway through a woman's eyes.

BEAUTY IS ANGUISH

Beauty is anguish; all the world over.
Sun-dialled silences, marking the hours;
Clouds on the mainland, over the towers;
Hum of the westwind, to the sea-rover;
Bumble bees tumbling, on seas of clover.
Veeries at vespers, hid in their bowers;
Angels of moonlight, guarding the flowers.
All these are anguish; unto the lover.

Challenging, wounding; till he discover
What is the mystery, told in their faces;
What is the history, hid in their graces?
Where is she biding; when the hawks hover?
What is she riding; when she breaks cover?
What cloud is sounding; always above her?

GOOD NIGHT, SWEET VANITY

Good night, sweet vanity, my dear delight.
Lovely enchantress of my early days,
And chorister unwearying in my praise!
I called thee Love, endowed with second sight,
And to thee most enduring vows did plight,
And kept them, patiently, through long delays;
Hoping, at last, we both might wear the bays.
For thee I have waged many a bloody fight,—

Let's see, my love! Was it upon the stage!
My memory, once perfect, dulls with age.
They tell us, now, that our last word is said.
"Why?" Oh, because our audience all is dead.
To-morrow we will air the curtains out
And try to think what it was all about.

THE NOVICE

The wind is in the laurels and I wait.
Watching the distant lights go to and fro
Among the sacred groves; no more I know.
Here have I stood before, outside the gate.
Proving the dark hours of novitiate;
Listening to reeded music softly blow
Like winds upon the waters in their flow.
This is the night when I may know my fate!

Will there be a rush down dim alleys, cool . . .
Forms flying . . . shoulders touching . . .
hand in hand . . .
Pulse drum . . . feet dancing to the pipes
of Pan!
The plunge at last into the cloistered pool
Of Beauty? I know nothing. Here I stand;
Hearing the wind among the laurels scan.

YOU GAVE ONE ALL

You gave one all; you gave the other naught.
One came unto the banquet surfeited;
Rolling fat eyes upon the tables spread,
Looking for some old titbit that he sought,
Or gluttonous by some new dainty caught.
The other whom you called came desert bred,
On locusts and wild honey sparsely fed.
Fasting and vigil had their sculpture wrought

Upon his rock, and the keen tool of death
Had traced on him its last refining breath
And finished for you some obscure plan
For making what you're pleased to call a man.
One came; and fixed his eyes upon the board.
The other stood; and looked upon his Lord.

SOME DAY

Some day there'll be an end of winter weather
And skies no longer will be overcast;
Some day routine no more our souls will tether
And we shall be free as the birds at last;

Then we will sit out on the hills together,
Mending these little bits of broken rhyme,
One wisp of cloud, light as a little feather
Becalmed in heaven, the only mark of time.

Distance no more our lonely lives can sever;
We wait no more the turning of the tide;
Care shall no longer then consume endeavour,
Nor envy touch the tender point of pride.
The joy of craftsmen shall be ours for ever
When we can work together side by side.

DEDICATIONS

He wrote them first for many sorts of eyes,
And many coils of softly tinted hair.
Behind them always there was something fair;
Mysteriously elusive; some surprise.
Hellas lay in the background of their skies
And life's unfinished beauty hovered there.
The poignant morning promise gave a flair
Of poetry to dullest prose — a prize

Worth much, one thinks; but in the end the queen,
Became a lady with a limousine;
And he was left with sonnets on his hands—
Those finely woven webs of silken strands!
He folded them and laid them on the shelf,
Knowing at last he wrote them for himself.

BEAUTY OF WOMEN

Rose of the soul, superb, immaculate,
Rising ascendant in the morning sky;
Beauty incarnate of the God most high!
Childbirth and sorrow thou dost compensate;
Love and rude pain together consummate.
None seeing thee shall ever pass thee by.
To thee men dying shall speed their last cry.
Mother inevitable, and our fate —

Final expression of creation,
Red rose of our damnation,
Sweet way of our salvation!
Rose of the morning, raiment of the soul,
To thee we kneel adoring, kiss thy stole,
And in thy healing beauty are made whole.

THE SINGING HIGHWAY

Give me the road that rises to the sky
By silent reaches, unencumbered, straight
As a grey arrow from the hand of fate;
Through open country, with the winds going by,
While all day long the swallows skim and fly,
And murmuring wires, o'erhead, vaticinate,
From their grim Calvaries, to the wicket gate
High on the marge, where earthly shadows die,

And only shining clouds, with wingéd feet,
Patrol the last long fields of goldenrod.
Up such a singing highway let me greet
The sunrise on the skyline; where the sod,
The humblest of His creatures, smiling sweet,
Lies like a child against the breast of God.

THE LAST MILE

When I reach my last hour you must not weep.
Death is too great and personal for tears;
Behind us then must be all griefs and fears.
For I a solitary vigil keep
While night wears on, and weary mortals sleep;
Biding the time when the horizon clears
And the first lark song steals upon my ears—
Beyond the deep — aye there — beyond the deep.

I want you with me then, you understand.
So, when I signal, let me take your hand,
And we will walk together that last mile,
And stand and wait together at the stile
For the first note and coming of the dawn,
And know through daybreak that love carries on.

RETURN

His sun set suddenly behind the cloud
Of sombre war that wrapped him in its shroud;
And there was darkness — utter, pulseless, dead.
It seemed as if light evermore had fled
From out my sky; save, here and there, afar,
Hope, like a memory, flickered in a star.

Then, lo, with spirit footfalls, white and still,
The moon rose from the shadow of a hill;
And I beheld the light upon her face
Reflected from some hidden heavenly place.

With measured step she paced the waiting hours
And filled my world with her celestial flowers;
Until the night was from the vigil won
And turning eastward I beheld the sun.

TO F. T. E.

From many a vineyard have these grapes been
crushed,

Of harsher lineage than Muscadine,

And withered now is many an ancient vine.

Young eager voices that to battle rushed,

But now to every earthly conflict hushed,

Living, had sung far better songs than mine.

To them I offer this poor cup of wine.

Full many a vintage has been better bushed,

But none more honored in the debt it pays.

They are the first-fruits of a nobler crop

And need from us no measured meed of praise.

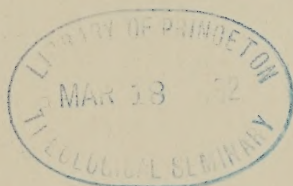
Our lives are harvested in lesser ways.

I thank them if my heart has given one drop

To mingle in the cup to them I raise.

DATE DUE

[illegible]



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Sonnets of north and south

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